



THE PRECIOUS TREASURY OF
THE WAY OF ABIDING

Longchen Rabjam

THE SEVEN TREASURIES SERIES

This is one of seven volumes written by Longchen Rabjam that, as a group, have come to be known as *The Seven Treasuries*. Although Longchenpa did not intend them to be a series, scholars traditionally treat them as such because of their interrelated themes.

The next volume in the series will be *The Precious Treasury of the Basic Space of Phenomena*.

The Precious Treasury of the Way of Abiding

AND

The Exposition of the Quintessential Meaning of the Three Categories

*A Commentary on the Precious Treasury
of the Way of Abiding*



Longchen Rabjam

Translated under the direction of
His Eminence Chagdud Tulku Rinpoche
by Richard Barron (Chökyi Nyima)

Edited by members of the
Padma Translation Committee:
Susanne Fairclough, Jeff Miller,
and Robert Racine



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Foreword

His Eminence Chagdud Tulku Rinpoche

The publication of this English translation of Longchen Rabjam's *The Precious Treasury of the Way of Abiding* should be a cause for rejoicing on the part of deeply committed English-speaking Buddhists who aspire to realize the Dzogchen, or Great Perfection, transmission of vajrayana Buddhism. Though there are many spiritual traditions in this world, Buddhism offers the deepest examination of what constitutes the root of samsara, and of how to deal with all levels of obscurations and attain liberation. Among Buddhist teachings, none are more profound, more capable of freeing the mind from its most subtle obscurations, than those of the Great Perfection.

Yet, because Great Perfection transmission leads to wisdom beyond words and concepts, the translation of Dzogchen texts presents tremendous difficulties. Some lamas have said that it is not even worth the attempt, that too much distortion results. I respect their opinion, but I feel that those of us with the supreme fortune to receive authentic transmission from great Dzogchen masters have a responsibility to maintain the oral lineage, including translation, as well as the mind-to-mind lineage of realization. If we eschew this work, the precious Great Perfection teachings will remain inaccessible to some excellent Western practitioners who have potential as meditators but who do not know Tibetan. An avenue for the flourishing of the transmission will be cut off.

I am also gravely concerned about the translations of Great Perfection texts produced by Westerners who know Tibetan but who rely

solely on scholarly knowledge, without recourse to teachers. Intellectual understanding alone, without the ripening process that takes place under the direction of qualified Dzogchen teachers, will certainly result in misguided translations, perpetuated in misguided meditation by those who base their spiritual practice on such translations. But again, if qualified Dzogchen masters refrain from working with translations because they fear imperfect results, can they lament when even more erroneous translations are published?

The translator of this text, Richard Barron (Chökyi Nyima), has truly mastered both literary and spoken Tibetan, but his deeper understanding is based on an extended retreat under the guidance of His Eminence Kalu Rinpoche, on a number of six-week Dzogchen retreats, and on listening to and translating the teachings of many eminent lamas. He has translated other Great Perfection texts and sādhanas, notably Dudjom Lingpa's *Buddhahood Without Meditation*, under my direction. He thus brings more capability to his work than mere theoretical and intellectual competence. The other members of the translation committee working with him likewise have a grounding in both the study of Dzogchen terminology and participation in annual Dzogchen retreats. Such learned scholars as Khenpo Petse Rinpoche and Khenpo Chodzod have been consulted on many details of the translation. I myself have brought to the process whatever Dzogchen understanding I have attained in the course of a long lifetime of study and meditation.

This means that while we have not necessarily produced a flawless work, we have confidence in this initial attempt. A great deal of time—years of effort, in fact—and expense have gone into the translation and editing. It should be understood that a work of this kind is not casually read and easily comprehended. For most people, the text is quite difficult to fathom, because its meaning unfolds according to the depth of their spiritual preparation. However, simply having the book in one's home is more valuable than having statues or stupas, for this is truly a relic of the dharmakaya. Such a holy work carries powerful blessings and is a worthy object of faith and devotion.

We intend to continue with this project and publish translations of other volumes of Longchen Rabjam's *Seven Treasures*. We encourage

anyone with knowledge and experience of the Great Perfection to contact us with suggestions, clarifications, or corrections, which we will consider for incorporation into future editions. May this precious text illuminate the minds of all who read and venerate it.

Introduction

Venerable Tulku Thondup Rinpoche

The Precious Treasury of the Way of Abiding with its autocommentary is one of the *Seven Treasuries* by Kunkhyen Longchen Rabjam (1308–1363). Longchen Rabjam was one of the greatest masters and most prolific writers of the Nyingma school of Tibetan Buddhism. This text details the approach to the discipline of ethics of Dzogpa Chenpo (the Great Perfection).

Biographical Sketch of Longchen Rabjam

Longchen Rabjam¹ was born in the Tra Valley of southern Tibet on the tenth day of the second month of the Earth Monkey year (1308). When he was conceived, his mother dreamed of a sun above a lion's head illuminating the whole world. At his birth, a dharma protectress appeared and, holding the baby in her arms, said, "I will protect him."

Longchen Rabjam was a reincarnation of Princess Pemasal (ninth century A.D.), whom Guru Rinpoche had entrusted with the transmission of the *Khadro Nyingt'hic* teachings. The princess took rebirth several centuries later as Pema Ledrel Tsal (1291–?), who discovered the *Khadro Nyingt'hic* as a *terma* (hidden treasure teaching) and who in turn was reborn as Longchen Rabjam.

¹ This sketch of Longchen Rabjam's life is adapted from *Masters of Meditation and Miracles*, by Tulku Thondup (Boston: Shambhala, 1996).

From childhood, Longchen Rabjam was endowed with the qualities of a noble being—faith, compassion, and wisdom. At the age of five, he could read and write with no difficulty. At seven, he was trained in medicine and astrology by his father and received esoteric transmissions from him as well. At twelve, Longchen Rabjam took the ordination of a novice monk from Khenpo Samdrup Rinchen at Samyé Monastery and was given the name Tsultrim Lodrö.

At nineteen, he went to the famous Sangp'hu Neut'hang monastic seminary, where he studied Buddhist philosophy, logic, and meditation for six years with Löpon Tsen-gonpa, Chöpal Gyaltsen, and others. He studied texts and received transmissions of sutras and tantras from more than twenty teachers. Because of his gift for scholarship, he became renowned as Samyé Lungmangwa (Master of Scriptures from Samyé) and Longchen Rabjam (Master of Infinite Realization).

At twenty-seven, he met Rigdzin Kumaradza (1266–1343), the holder of the *Vima Nyingt'hic* teachings, in the highlands of Yartö Kyam Valley. He studied with Rigdzin Kumaradza for two years, receiving instructions on all three divisions of Dzogpa Chenpo. But the main emphasis of his studies was the texts of the four cycles of the Men Ngag De division, namely the Outer, Inner, Esoteric, and Innermost Esoteric cycles.

While he was studying with Rigdzin Kumaradza, Longchen Rabjam lived under extremely austere conditions. To combat attachment to the material world, Rigdzin Kumaradza moved from place to place, never settling anywhere for long. In nine months, he and his disciples moved camp nine times, causing great hardship for Longchen Rabjam and everyone else. No sooner would he get used to a simple life in some temporary shelter—usually a cave—that protected him from the snow and freezing wind, than he would have to move again. He subsisted on very little food and slept only on a sack, which served as both his mattress and blanket. It was under such hardship that he received transmission of the most rare and precious tantras and instructions of the three divisions of Dzogpa Chenpo. At the end of two years, Rigdzin Kumaradza empowered Longchen Rabjam as the lineage holder of his teachings.

Then for the next six or seven years, Longchen Rabjam maintained strict solitary meditation retreats, mainly at Samyé Chimp'hu. At

thirty-two, while still in retreat, he conferred the transmission of the *Vima Nyingt'hic* on his disciples at Nyip'hu Shuksep in Kang-ri T'hökar. For some time the surroundings became luminous; everyone heard mystical sounds and experienced pure visions.

Soon the yogin Özer Kocha and the dharma protectress Shenpa Sogdrupma offered him the text of the *Khadro Nyingt'hic*, discovered as a terma by Pema Ledrel Tsai. Although Longchen Rabjam was the reincarnation of the discoverer of the *Khadro Nyingt'hic*, in order to demonstrate the importance of preserving the transmission for future followers, he went to Shö Gyalsé, a disciple of Pema Ledrel Tsai, from whom he received the transmission of the *Khadro Nyingt'hic*.

At thirty-three, he gave the *Khadro Nyingt'hic* teachings to eight male and female disciples at Samyé Chimp'hu. Some of the disciples saw him in sambhogakaya form. A rain of flowers showered down. Arcs, beams, and spheres of colored light were seen everywhere. All those assembled sang and danced amid the overwhelming experience of the display of wisdom. For a long time the disciples were absorbed in the experience of deep luminous clarity, which transcends sleep and waking reality. At this, Longchen Rabjam sang:

O yogins! I am happy and joyous.
 Tonight, we are the unexcelled pure land.
 Our body is the palace of peaceful and wrathful deities.
 In it prospers the assembly of buddhas, [the union of] clarity
 and emptiness.
 Buddhahood is not somewhere else, but within us.

He repeatedly visited his master Rigdzin Kumaradza to perfect his own realization. He offered all of what little he possessed to his master five times to purify his clinging to material objects.

Then he moved to Kang-ri T'hökar, where he spent the greater part of his later life composing most of his famous works. People witnessed many dharma protectors in human form serving him by preparing paper and ink when he wrote. His meditative realization of Dzogpa Chenpo reached the state of "the perfection of intrinsic awareness" (*rig pa tshad phebs*).

In Bhutan he gave teachings to assemblies that sometimes numbered one hundred thousand. He established T'harpa Ling Monastery

in Bumt'hang and Samten Ling Monastery in Patro. His son, Tulku Trakpa Özer (1356–1409?), was born to his consort, Kyidpa, of Bhutan.

Longchen Rabjam became one of the greatest scholars and realized sages of Tibet. Crowds of disciples followed him wherever he went, but he remained a simple hermit with minimal belongings, often dwelling in caves.

He saw solitude in nature as a source of spiritual awakening. For him, nature's peaceful and clear environment inspired peace and clarity, enabling practitioners to unite with ultimate joy, to attain the oneness of universal openness and luminous clarity. He wrote:

Far from towns bustling with entertainment,
living in the forest naturally increases one's peaceful absorption,
creates harmony between life and the dharma, tames the mind,
and brings one to the attainment of ultimate joy.²

He avoided building monasteries and lived in solitude, advising his followers to do the same:

Gathering many followers through various means
and establishing monastic seats and facilities
causes attachment in one's own mind and conflicts with others.
So my heart advice to you is to live in solitude.³

He was direct and sincere and, caring only about helping others, never courted favor or sought approval. However great were the offerings made to him, he never expressed gratitude, saying merely, "Let the patrons have the opportunity to accumulate merit, rather than being rewarded for their offerings by expressions of gratitude." He never showed reverence to a layperson, however politically powerful, but instead said, "Homage should be paid to the Three Jewels but not to mundane people. It is not right to reverse the roles of lama and patron." He was immensely kind to the poor and suffering. He enjoyed

² Folio 69b/2, *Nags tshal kun tu dga' ba'i gtam*, by Ngagi Wangpo (Longchen Rabjam) (Adzom edition).

³ Folio 55a/3, *sNying gtam sum chu pa rtsom gsung thor bu*, by Longchen Rabjam. Sung Thorbu (Adzom edition).

with great pleasure the simple food they offered and said many prayers of aspiration for them. Anything offered to him with faith he used strictly for the dharma, never for any mundane or selfish purpose.

At the age of fifty-six, he unexpectedly started dictating his spiritual testament, entitled *The Immaculate Radiance*, which includes the following lines:

The nature of the mind is the ultimate sphere, like space.
 The nature of space is the nature of the mind, the innate nature.
 In meaning they are not separate.
 They are the oneness of great perfection.
 Please realize the nature at this very moment. . . .

My delight at death is much greater than
 the joy of traders who have made their fortunes at sea,
 the lords of the gods who have proclaimed their victory in war,
 or those sages who are abiding in absorption.
 Now, Pema Ledrel Tsal will not remain here much longer.
 I go to secure the blissful and deathless nature.⁴

At Samyé Chimp'hu, he announced the approach of his death and started to show signs of physical illness. However, he continued to address the huge gathering that had assembled for his teachings.

On the sixteenth day of the twelfth month of the Water Hare year (1363), he performed an elaborate offering ceremony with his disciples. He then gave them his last teachings on impermanence and inspired them to practice the *trekchö* and *tögal* meditations of Dzogpa Chenpo. On the eighteenth, while he was seated in dharmakaya posture, his mind merged into the ultimate sphere. All those present felt the earth tremble and heard roaring resound from the sky. While his body was preserved for twenty-five days, a tent of rainbows arched across the sky. Even in those coldest of months in Tibet, the earth became warm, the ice melted, and roses bloomed. At the time of cremation, the earth trembled three times and a loud sound reverberated seven times. Many *ringsels* (small white pellets) and five kinds of *dungchens* (larger pellets of different colors) emerged from the bones

⁴ Folio 132b/5, *Zhal chems dri ma med pa'i 'od*, by Longchen Rabiam. *Khadro Nying-thig*, Vol. Hum (Adzom edition).

as an indication of his attainment of the five kayas and five wisdoms of buddhahood.

Longchen Rabjam wrote more than two hundred and fifty treatises on history, ethics, sutric and tantric teachings, and, especially, Dzogpa Chenpo. He presented all of his teachings in the form of compositions. But many scholars have affirmed that most of his works on the tantras and on Dzogpa Chenpo are actually *gongter* (mind treasure teachings), discovered through the power of his enlightened mind. The foremost collection of his works is *The Seven Treasures* (*mDzod bdun*), comprising a total of eleven treatises. The present text incorporates two of these, *The Precious Treasury of the Way of Abiding* and its autocommentary.

Dzogpa Chenpo

According to Dzogpa Chenpo (atiyoga), the entire corpus of Buddhist teachings is classified into two divisions: the exoteric (sutric) and esoteric (tantric) teachings. The exoteric teachings are further divided into three yantras (vehicles): those of shravakas, pratyekabuddhas, and mahayanists. The esoteric teachings are divided into six tantras: the three outer tantras of kriyayoga, charyayoga, and yogatantra and the three inner tantras of mahayoga, anuyoga, and atiyoga. These three yantras and six tantras constitute “the nine yantras.”

Dzogpa Chenpo is the pinnacle of the nine yantras. It encompasses the qualities of all of them,⁵ since the higher yantras embody the merits of the lower ones. In order to realize Dzogpa Chenpo, most of us need to develop through gradual stages of training. This is why the lower yantras are essential stepping stones for the higher ones. Furthermore, many of us may never be ready for the highest yantras, and the lower ones might be the only suitable path. Practitioners journey toward the goal of buddhahood, directly or indirectly, following these different paths. Higher yantras are more direct and powerful, and enable one to reach the goal more swiftly than do the lower ones.

⁵ Folio 62a/4, *Chos dbyings mdzod 'grel lung gi gter mdzod*, by Longchen Rabjam (Adzom edition).

Summarizing Dzogpa Chenpo meditation, Longchen Rabjam writes:

It is important to look directly at [the nature of] thoughts
when they arise.

It is important to remain in [the nature] when you are
certain of it.

It is important to have the meditationless meditation
as your meditation.

Without wavering, maintain it: this is my heart advice.⁶

The Third Dodrupchen (1865–1926) explains how to realize intrinsic awareness (*rig pa*):

Use intrinsic awareness as the way [meditation]. Maintain only that awareness. Do not employ any concepts, since concepts are mind [and not the nature of mind]. Meditate [on intrinsic awareness after] having distinguished between mind and intrinsic awareness.⁷

Through such training one attains the absolute perfection of the realization of intrinsic awareness, which is the ultimate universal nature. Longchen Rabjam writes:

The true nature of the world is the true nature of the mind.

It is never born and is beyond sorrow.

Liberation will be attained by seeing the nature of the mind itself,
the true nature of phenomena.

Then there is no other peace to attain.⁸

Intrinsic awareness is luminous wisdom, the union of appearances and openness (*snang stong*). It embodies the three kayas: like space, its essence is openness, the dharmakaya; like light, its nature is clarity, the sambhogakaya; like radiance, its compassion is omnipresent and powerful, the nirmanakaya.

⁶ Folio 57a/3, *sNying gtam sum chu pa rtsom gsung thor bu*, by Longchen Rabjam. Sung Thorbu (Adzom edition).

⁷ Folio 7b/4, *rDzogs chen thor bu*, by Jigmé Tenpé Nyima (Dodrup Sangye Lama edition).

⁸ Folio 4a/1, *rDzogs pa chen po sems nyid rang grol*, by Drimé Özer (Longchen Rabjam) (Adzom edition).

Dzogpa Chenpo asserts that the true nature of mind is intrinsic awareness, the fully enlightened nature. It might appear to be similar to the view of the Mind Only (Chittamatra) school, which asserts the presence of a thoroughly established (*yongs grub*) buddha nature. Dzogpa Chenpo, however, does not view the true nature of mind as thoroughly established, but rather as awareness free of elaboration (*spros bral*). Freedom from elaboration is the main philosophical position of the Consequence (Prasangika) view of the Middle Way (Madhyamika) school. In fact, Longchen Rabjam himself makes clear⁹ that the view of Dzogpa Chenpo is in agreement with the Consequence view.

Through the path of Dzogpa Chenpo, intrinsic awareness awakens instantly, but to awaken and perfect such realization, we must go through various levels of gross and subtle experiences to peel away many layers of dualistic habits. To accomplish this, we must rely on the honest guidance of experienced teachers, the strength of meritorious deeds, and the power of enlightened blessings.

Most of the great traditional Dzogpa Chenpo teachers would strongly discourage their students from reading anything about Dzogpa Chenpo that they are not yet ready to experience. Students might form concepts about the experience of Dzogpa Chenpo based on intellectual information before they have a sufficient meditative foundation. Then it would be hard to determine whether their experience is authentic or just imagined on the basis of conceptual information gained prematurely. So, until they are ready, those who are serious about seeking authentic realization should avoid any writings or oral teachings on Dzogpa Chenpo that explain the practical steps of meditation and their stages of experience.

Some lower yantras can lead to the cessation of suffering and others to the attainment of Buddhahood in a number of lifetimes. By training in Dzogpa Chenpo, however, one can attain in a few years the fully enlightened state, endowed with the three kayas and the five wisdoms. In this way, one can benefit every being who is open to one's enlightened intent (*dgongs pa*).

⁹ Folio 76b/1, *Chos dbiyings mdzod 'grel lung gi gter mdzod*, by Longchen Rabjam (Adzom edition).

When Dzogpa Chenpo masters die, there are frequently miraculous signs indicating that they have reached the highest goal. At the time of their death, a few masters in this lineage attained “the light body of great transformation” (*'ja' lus 'pho ba chen po*). That is, their gross body was transformed into a light body with the capacity to benefit others. Many attained “the rainbow body” (*'ja' lus*). That is, emanating colorful rays and spheres of light, their gross body totally dissolved at the time of death, leaving only nails and hair behind. Sonam Namgyal (d. 1952) was one of the most recent meditators to attain a rainbow body, as was witnessed by many. Others left in their cremation ashes *ringsels*, *dungs*, and bones imprinted with images of deities as a sign of their attainment of buddhahood.

The Precious Treasury of the Way of Abiding

The Precious Treasury of the Way of Abiding, or *The Precious Treasury on the Ultimate Nature* (*gNas lugs rin po che'i mdzod*), is a discourse on the four unique disciplineless disciplines (samayas) of Dzogpa Chenpo. These are the disciplines of transcending (or ineffability) and openness of *trekchö* and the disciplines of oneness and spontaneous perfection (or spontaneous presence) of *tögal*.

Meditators who have realized the true meaning of Dzogpa Chenpo and who are progressing through higher stages of Dzogpa Chenpo realization do not need to observe any discipline, as it will only restrict and condition their minds and actions. These meditators have already transcended mundane concepts of duality and afflicting emotions. For them, there is no self to project and no self to grasp at or cherish. Whatever they say or do becomes a source of ultimate peace and benefit for others and themselves. Remaining in the four disciplineless disciplines is the discipline. These are realizing (a) the nonexistence (*med pa*) of restrictions and (b) total openness (*phyal ba*), that is, freedom from duality, and experiencing (c) the oneness (*gcig pu*) of subject, object, and action and (d) the spontaneous presence (*lhun grub*) of original purity (*ka dag*).

The Precious Treasury of the Way of Abiding elucidates these four disciplines under four topics: (a) explaining their key points as they are, (b) determining that they are self-arisen ultimate primordial wis-

dom, (c) reasoning that they are unborn and transcend the field of thoughts, and (d) perfecting their final goals, which transcend efforts and causal effects.

In order to attain ultimate freedom, the great master Paltrul Rinpoche (1808–1887) recommends this text as the supreme guide:

The *way of abiding* [or *ultimate nature*], the dharmakaya,
 in which there is nothing to uphold, transcends causality.
 This is the *treasury* of Samantabhadra's visions.
 Through such excellent teachings, if you can't stop your
 mental elaborations
 how can you dismantle your clinging thoughts through
 conceptual spiritual approaches?¹⁰

Under the guidance of the great Dzogpa Chenpo master Chagdud Tulku Rinpoche, a translation committee headed by the most gifted *lotsawa* Chökyi Nyima has made this precious teaching, one of the canonical texts of Dzogpa Chenpo, available in English. On behalf of the golden lineage of Longchen Rabjam, it is my privilege to offer my gratitude to all who have dedicated their lives to bringing the new dawn of these supreme teachings to the Western world. It is also my obligation to beseech readers not to turn these ambrosia-like teachings into commercial commodities or tools for mere intellectual stimulation, but to welcome them as the means of awakening the union of intrinsic awareness and ultimate openness, free of limitations, in the hearts of all.

¹⁰ Folio 2a/1, *Kun mkhyen klong chen pa'i gsun grab mdzod bdun la blta bar bskul ba*, by Paltrul Rinpoche. Paltrul Sungbum, Vol. Ka (Chendu edition, edited by Zenkar Rinpoche).

Translation Committee's Preface

The Precious Treasury of the Way of Abiding, one volume in the great Longchen Rabjam's famous collection, *The Seven Treasures*, consists of a set of source verses and Longchen Rabjam's own commentary on them. In traditional Buddhist writing, important works are often structured in this way. The verses provide a summary of the subject matter dealt with at length in the prose commentary and have the advantage of being more easily memorized than the complete text. Indeed, in the past, studying such texts included committing the verses to memory, enabling the student to readily call to mind the issues elaborated on in the commentary. The present volume preserves this structure: the beginning section, containing the source verses, is followed by the commentary, within which the verses (printed in bold-face type) are cited by Longchen Rabjam as steps in the development of his presentation.

To some extent, each volume of *The Seven Treasures* addresses the spiritual approach of the Great Perfection, or Dzogchen, the pinnacle of Buddhist thought and practice according to the Nyingma school. As the title of its commentary ("The Exposition of the Quintessential Meaning of the Three Categories") indicates, *The Precious Treasury of the Way of Abiding* focuses on the three categories of Dzogchen—Mind, Expanse, and Direct Transmission—especially the third category. The true value and meaning of such a text can be approached only from this higher perspective.

This text contains a detailed discussion of the four major principles of samaya entailed in Dzogchen practice and experience, not as disciplines to be maintained but rather as the ideal way of being—the “way of abiding”—to which one remains true in following this spiritual path. As the names of these samaya principles suggest, their truth lies in the direct experience one gains of the way in which all things truly abide by their very nature.

The Dzogchen approach is said to “speak its own language,” employing terminology and styles of presentation that are often unique. As such, it must be understood on its own grounds, and too literal an interpretation can lead to enormous misunderstandings. In the Dzogchen sources from which Longchen Rabjam quotes so liberally—especially *The All-Creating Monarch* (traditionally considered the primary source tantra of the Category of Mind) and many of the seventeen source tantras of the Category of Direct Transmission—the language employed is sometimes quasi-theistic. However, this should not be interpreted as a divine creator speaking to others, but rather as the very nature of being communicating with itself. As well, the exegesis found in the present text is geared to students of the highest acumen and so does not require the argumentation and lines of reasoning employed in lower spiritual approaches. Longchen Rabjam assumes that the reader will grasp the implications without requiring more elaborate conceptual proofs.

It is common for terms used in a Dzogchen context to differ in meaning from the same terms used in other contexts. In translating key Dzogchen terms, we have attempted to choose meanings that are neither too narrow nor appropriate only in other Buddhist approaches; to do so would be to miss their wide-ranging significance within the expansive view of Dzogchen. To make the text more accessible to the reader, we have tried to avoid both extremes of using “dharma jargon” (words and phrases that are all too familiar but whose meaning is vague) and reverting to English that is based on Western paradigms (which may have inappropriate associations). Though extremely profound, Dzogchen does not rely on complex thought processes; its language is simple (which is not to say simplistic) and is meant to be simple to read, with the deeper import becoming clear only when one works with a teacher.

We have retained certain Sanskrit terms. Some of these terms are well on their way to becoming familiar in colloquial English or are already in Western dictionaries (for example, "mahayana"). Other terms (for example, "vajra" and "dharmakaya") carry a wealth or breadth of meaning that is not easily translated into English.

A brief discussion of the Tibetan term *medpa* is in order because of the importance of the term in this work and because we translate it in two ways—as "nonexistence" and as "ineffability." In other Buddhist approaches, *medpa* is usually translated as "nonexistence." In the Dzogchen approach, however, the term is not limited to that meaning, for it can also denote that which transcends both extremes of existence and nonexistence, in which case we have chosen to translate it as "ineffability."

In preparing this translation, we consulted three different editions of *The Precious Treasury of the Way of Abiding*. Our primary source, and perhaps the most readily available of these editions, is the one printed from wood blocks carved at the Adzom Chögar printery in eastern Tibet, presumably in the early part of this century. These prints were brought out of Tibet and published by H.H. Dodrupchen Rinpoche in Gangtok, Sikkim, as a photo offset edition. We were also fortunate to have access to a recently corrected and reissued edition of the same blocks (which we refer to as the "revised Adzom Chögar edition") acquired by H.E. Chagdud Tulku Rinpoche on his visit to eastern Tibet in 1987. The third edition is a photo offset of a print made from blocks carved at the printery in Dergé (the cultural and political center of eastern Tibet before 1959), published in 1983 by Sherab Gyaltsen and Khentse Labrang, Gangtok, Sikkim. Our handling of variant readings within and among these editions is discussed in the notes.

We wish to express our deepest gratitude to His Eminence Chagdud Tulku Rinpoche for envisioning the project of bringing this seminal collection by Longchen Rabjam to English-reading practitioners, and for his continuous blessings, inspiration, and guidance in seeing it to completion. We wish to thank Erik Schmidt (Pema Kunsang) for reading two drafts of the manuscript and offering valuable comments. Finally, we thank our copy editor, Mary Racine, as well as Linda Baer, who typeset the book.

The Precious Treasury of the Way of Abiding

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THE SOURCE VERSES

In Sanskrit: *Tathātva ratna koṣa nāma*

ଶ୍ରୀଶର୍ମକୁଣ୍ଡଳୀ

In Tibetan: *gNas lugs rin po che'i mdzod ces bya ba*

ଶଦ୍ରାଙ୍ଗନୀ ଶତଶ୍ରୁଷାଶ୍ରୀପାତରୀପାହିନୀ

ଦୟାକୁଳେଷଣର୍ଥାବ୍ୟା

HOMAGE TO GLORIOUS SAMANTABHADRA!

Primordial buddhahood, the ground of fully evident enlightenment,
unchanging, spontaneously present, the basic space of the vajra
heart essence—

the nature of mind is natural great perfection.

I pay homage to this, with nothing to discard or adopt, nothing
to come or go.

The expanse of the inexpressible nature of phenomena,
the very pinnacle of view, is great perfection.

Listen as I explain, according to my realization,
the meaningfulness of that which transcends everything and is unlike
anything else.

For the categories of Mind, Expanse, and Direct Transmission,
the consummate meaning of the heart essence
is that of ineffability, openness, spontaneous presence, and oneness.
Each of these has four divisions: revealing the key point, discerning
the implications,
embracing the larger scope, and coming to the decisive experience.

Of these, I will first demonstrate the theme of ineffability.
The ineffable nature of things is that they are empty by virtue
of their very essence.

In the vast expanse of awakened mind, equal to space,
however things appear, they are at the same time ineffable by nature.

Within the womb of basic space as an infinite sky,
 however the universe manifests through transitions and changes
 in the four elements,
 these forms of emptiness are ineffable by nature,
 as are phenomena that are the manifest aspect of awakened mind.
 Just as illusory images, while manifesting in any way whatsoever,
 are empty by nature and have no substance,
 so all phenomena—the world of appearances and possibilities—
 even as they manifest
 do not waver from awakened mind and have no substance.
 Just as dreams do not stray from sleep
 and, even as they appear, are by nature ineffable,
 the world of appearances and possibilities, whether of samsara
 or nirvana,
 likewise does not waver from the scope of awakened mind
 and has no substance or characteristics.
 Although phenomena appear as they do to the mind,
 they are not mind, nor anything other than mind.
 Given their illusory nature as clearly apparent yet ineffable
 manifestations,
 moment by moment they are beyond description, imagination,
 or expression.
 For this reason, know that all phenomena that appear to the mind
 are ineffable even as they manifest.
 And so, just as apparent objects are ineffable by nature,
 the nature of awakened mind, which perceives them,
 is in essence ineffability, like that of space.
 Know this to be beyond description, imagination, or expression.
 In naturally occurring timeless awareness, the ultimate heart essence,
 there is no causality, so the abyss of samsara is crossed.
 There is no better or worse, so samsara and nirvana are
 an integrated mandala.
 There is no error or obscuration, so the three planes of conditioned
 existence are seen through incisively.
 Enlightenment—the nature of mind, like space—
 is not defined by any extreme or bias, for it is nondual by nature.
 So there is no view to be cultivated, no samaya to be upheld,

no effort to be made in enlightened activity, nothing to obscure
 timeless awareness,
 no levels on which to train, no paths to be traversed,
 no subtle factors, no duality, no dependent relationship.
 Since value judgments are transcended, there is nothing spiritual
 or nonspiritual.
 This expanse, like the Isle of Gold in that it entails no differentiation
 or exclusion,
 is the naturally occurring nature of mind, like space,
 ineffable by nature and beyond all characterization and expression.
 Within the ultimate heart essence—awareness as such—
 there is nothing to improve upon, so positive actions bring no benefit.
 There is nothing to deteriorate, so negative actions inflict no injury.
 There is no karmic causality, so there is no happiness or suffering
 as its inevitable consequence.
 There is no better or worse, so there is no rejection of samsara
 or acceptance of nirvana.
 There is no way to think of or express this essence, so there is freedom
 from all such attempts.
 There is no before or after, so successive lifetimes are mere labels.
 How can anything be perpetuated?
 How can anyone move through samsara at all?
 What is karma? What are its inevitable consequences?
 Contemplate and examine the ultimate meaning, which is like space.
 Even though you investigate intelligently, contemplating and
 analyzing over and over,
 there is no fragment of substance—not even an atom can be found—
 and no division of time.
 With no dualistic perception, in that very moment there is abiding
 in the heart essence,
 ultimately meaningful and fundamentally unconditioned.
 Ineffable when examined—and by the same token ineffable when
 not examined—
 phenomena in their multiplicity are always ineffable,
 since there is not the slightest frame of reference, even in terms
 of conventional labels.
 Know that by nature they have no substance, like illusions.

| क्षी'वस्तु'प'श्चद'परि'सद'नुसारा | मौ'विष्णु'प'लित'परा'पत्तेन'नुयदा'।
 | सद'विद'मेष'क्षमा'पत्तेन'नम'नुसारा | विद'परि'क्षेव'मौ'विष्णु'क्षमा'
 | पद्मा'निद'लित'परा'पत्तेन'नियदा'। निद'निष'परि'क्षेव'प्रस'विष्णु'क्षमा'
 | नियद'नुसारा'मौ'विष'विद'परा'क्षमा | क्षु'विष'परि'क्षेव'निद'नुयदा'
 | हिष'क्षम'विद'परि'विष'निद'नुसारा' | शुद्ध'विद'मौ'विष'विद'निष'विष'
 | क्षु'विष'परि'विष'परा'निद'नुयदा' | निष'विष'परि'विष'विद'निष'विष'
 | विष'विद'नुसारा'मौ'विष'विद'निष'विष'विष'विष'विष'
 | विद'परि'क्षेव'निद'नुसारा'पत्तेन'नुयदा' | युव'विद'क्षम'नग'नुयद'विद'निद'नुयदा'
 | क्षु'विद'क्षेव'प्रस'विष'विद'नियदा' | विद'परि'क्षेव'क्षमा'प'विष'विष'विष'
 | नियद'नुसारा'मौ'विष'विद'नियदा' | शिव'निद'नुयदा'
 | विद'परि'क्षेव'निद'नुसारा' | विद'परि'क्षेव'निद'नुयदा'मौ'विद'नि'

Within the context of emptiness that is inherent in dreams
 and magical illusions,
 those who are unwise and immature are bound by fixation,
 but those who are conscious of the nature of these cannot be bound.
 Likewise, people who lack wisdom concerning ineffability
 are bound by fixation on identity and so are caught up in samsara,
 while wise people who are immersed in genuine being—
 aware of thatness and decisive in the very moment about
 ineffability—
 are free within the expanse, the nature of phenomena in which there is
 no causality.

In the awakened nature of mind, which can be neither affirmed
 nor denied,
 timeless awareness without dualistic perception abides
 as a matter of course.

In naked awareness, involving no causality,
 abides the unique sphere that is neither positive nor negative.
 In unobstructed awareness, without limit or center,
 the wholly positive enlightened intent of dharmakaya abides
 as a matter of course.

In enlightenment—self-knowing awareness, the heart essence
 of ineffability—
 the totally pure and nonreferential intent of victorious ones
 is clearly evident.

As the natural manifestations of awareness, ineffable phenomena
 arise as its unceasing display
 for those immersed in the genuine nature of illusoriness.
 They decide that these are ineffable even as they arise
 and do not react in the slightest with acceptance or rejection.
 They abide in supreme imperturbable rest, which is carefree
 with a deep inner spaciousness.

The immature, fooled by what is ineffable, are like deer
 pursuing a mirage of water for which they thirst.
 Since they invest meaning in conventional labels—the language
 of confusion—
 they are hampered in their respective philosophies, misconstruing
 phenomena as having identity.

Since the eight developmental approaches do not avoid the pitfall
 of ordinary mind,
 the genuine and ultimate heart essence is not seen.
 Atiyoga—basic space transcending phenomena, completely
 ineffable—is of the nature of space.
 Moment by moment, there is no wavering from dharmakaya,
 the natural place of rest.
 Throughout the vastness of original basic space,
 there is spontaneous presence in supremely blissful and natural rest.
 If you do not realize secret awareness—that which is ultimately
 meaningful in enlightened intent—
 you will never be freed by that which entails deliberate effort.
 Don't you know that anything composite is impermanent and subject
 to disintegration?
 How can the tight and intricate knot of ordinary body, speech,
 and mind
 touch upon the ultimate meaning of the indestructible heart essence?
 This being so, if you desire what is sublimely meaningful—
 the way of abiding—
 put aside all factors that, like so many childish games,
 fetter and exhaust you physically, verbally, and mentally.
 The nature of ineffability, the expanse free of elaboration,
 is the nature of phenomena—natural great perfection.
 In expansiveness beyond imagination, in which nothing
 need be done,
 behold the ultimate meaning of supreme, uncontrived evenness.
 Since this is beyond causality and deliberate effort, be decisive.
 Self-knowing awareness, involving no perception of outer object
 and inner subject,
 has no time or place and is beyond phenomena that originate
 or cease.
 It is pure like space, and so entails no provisional spiritual approach.
 Since all thoughts of this as ultimately existent are mistaken,
 avoid any pitfall or obscuration that comes from misconstruing
 phenomena as having identity.
 In the indivisible and wholly positive realm, be decisive in supreme
 and infinite emptiness.

Stand firm in the nature of phenomena, which is without transition or change.

In the primordial realm of basic space that does not abide in any specific way,

the superficial layers of view are cut through incisively, and the key point in its entirety is revealed to be ineffability.

Thus, with the key point of ineffability having been revealed, one implication is that awareness—a state of imperturbable rest not cultivated in meditation—

can be discerned in the absence of acceptance or rejection of whatever arises.

The vast expanse is the integrated mandala of mind.

Vajra basic space—the supremely blissful state of natural rest—is sublime meditative stability, spontaneously present without having to be cultivated.

Always present, like the course of a great river, it is self-evident if there is uncontrived equipoise.

The nature of phenomena, at rest just as it is, is similar to space. Since there is no transition or change, there is no question of whether or not there is distraction.

The immensity of sublime basic space, which does not form and then disintegrate,

is not within the range of finite experience that can be characterized by words.

Those immersed in genuine being—for whom naturally arising

awareness wells forth as the expanse of sublime knowing, whose minds are not pedantic even though they have heard many teachings,

and who experience what is indescribable and beyond imagination—decide that this is not a matter of anything being characterized or not. Since neither meditation nor anything on which to meditate

can be found,

there is no need to slay the foes of lethargy and agitation.

Since the heart essence is ineffability (the timeless freedom of apparent phenomena and mind),

the expanse of evenness (the nature of phenomena in which confusion settles out naturally)

- ।**त्रूपः कद्यपि द्यपदः केषाः शुद्धिर्द्यपदात् वा गत्वा** ।**एवं शूष्पर्वेसामेद्यद्यस्त्वं शात्तेषानुवाच्या**
। एवं वदीनुसाक्षात्वाद्यद्यपदात् वा गत्वा ।**गत्वा वदीनुसाक्षात्वाद्यपदात् वा गत्वा**
। शूष्पवदीनुसाक्षात्वाद्यस्त्वं शूष्पवदात् वा गत्वा ।**केषामेद्यस्त्वं केषामेद्यस्त्वं शूष्पवदात् वा**
। गत्वाक्षात्वामाण्डेष्टकेषाः शुद्धिर्द्यपदात् वा गत्वा ।**द्यद्यस्त्वं रेसामेद्यस्त्वं वदीन्द्र्यपदात् वा गत्वा**
। एवं द्यद्यमेद्यपदात् वदीनुस्त्रीश्चिद्यपदात् वा गत्वा ।**एवं शूद्धित्वं एवं वृक्षेष्टक्षामेवात्तद्यद्य।**
। त्रूपाल्पवदेष्टक्षामेवात्तद्यद्य। ।**द्यद्यस्त्वं रेसामेद्यस्त्वं वदीन्द्र्यपदात् वा गत्वा**
। द्यद्यमेष्टक्षामेवात्तद्यद्ययवाह्निमेद्यत्तिद्य। ।**युवास्तिमेषामेद्यद्यत्तेषामात्रामात्रामेवीद्यपदात् वा गत्वा**
। त्रूपवदेष्टक्षामेद्यस्त्वं शूद्धिर्वेसावदात् वा गत्वा ।**स्तिमेषात्तद्यस्त्वं शात्तेषानुवाच्यानुवाच्यानुवाच्यानुवाच्यानुवाच्यानुवाच्यानुवाच्या**
। एवं द्यद्यकेषावदात् वा गत्वा त्रूपवदेष्टक्षामेवात्तद्यद्ययवाह्निमेद्यत्तिद्य। ।**एवं द्यद्यकेषामेद्यस्त्वं वदीन्द्र्यस्त्वं शूष्पवदीकेषामेद्यत्तिद्य।**
। एवं द्यद्यरेसामेद्यस्त्वं वदीन्द्र्यस्त्वं शूष्पवदात् वा गत्वा ।**गत्वात्तद्यस्त्वं शूष्पवदीकेषामेद्यत्तिद्य।**

abides uninterruptedly in the realm of dharmakaya.

There is no division between things arising and being free;
they converge in a single blissful expanse.

In arising, they arise naturally, holding to their own place.

In abiding, they abide naturally, holding to their own place.

In being freed, they are freed naturally, holding to their own place.
Everything is naturally free, arising from the expanse of the nature
of phenomena,

and thus does not stray elsewhere, being simply the display
of dharmakaya.

Apparent phenomena, naturally manifest and experienced
unconditionally, are the natural expressions of emptiness.

They abide in the ultimate heart essence, being neither positive
nor negative.

Whatever appears and whatever arises,
all things that proliferate and abide as dynamic expressions
of awareness—

such as the five emotional poisons—

no matter how they arise, even as they do so

there is recognition, perfection of their dynamic energy, and their
natural fading, leaving no trace.

One implication is that equipoise constitutes a state of imperturbable
rest in the “interval” between objects and mind.

Another implication is that, like a bird in flight, naturally occurring
timeless awareness leaves no trace.

Another implication is that everything is of one basic space,
like waves on water.

Phenomena are forever discerned within the context of the
supreme secret,

and so it is in the nature of things that freedom comes about simply
through an understanding of this key point.

At any point, within the vast expanse of enlightened intent—
self-knowing awareness—

phenomena, without being better or worse, arise equally,
abide equally, and are freed equally.

Since there is no phenomenon that is unequal, nonabiding,
and not freed,

another implication that can be discerned is that enlightenment
is a spacious and timeless expanse.

From awareness, uncreated and spontaneously present,
arises enlightened intent, a natural state of rest that is effortless
and spacious.

Awakened mind, beyond any causes and effects, whether positive
or negative,

is discerned within the realm of the unchanging nature
of phenomena.

Spacious enlightened intent, whose very nature is ineffable,
embraces all phenomena without exception within its scope.
Just as the universe is subsumed within the compass of space,
so phenomena, naturally manifest, are subsumed within supreme
and timeless emptiness.

Samsara is just a label: cause and effect, effort and achievement,
are transcended.

There are no positive or negative actions that benefit or harm—
the context of emptiness.

Liberation is just a label: nirvana does not exist.

There is nothing to be sought or achieved through the ten attributes.
Striving again and again after phenomena that are exhausting
is like a child making sand castles, for these things are subject
to destruction.

Further, everything entailing effort—all that involves cause and effect,
virtue and harm—

is timelessly embraced within the larger scope of ineffability.

Now, those who are immersed in the genuine heart essence of ati—
having decided that all teachings on causality, which are designed
to guide the immature,

are paths for the less fortunate who progress upward in stages—
embrace the enlightened intent that is the very essence, the ultimate
meaning that transcends phenomena,

within the larger scope of space, in which nothing need be done.

Deliberate action misleads—look at the confusing appearances
of samsara.

Effort corrupts—think about the machinations of suffering.

With virtue and harm, there is an uninterrupted flow of happiness and
suffering.

Karma is reinforced, causing one to wander high and low
through samsara.

There is no opportunity to escape the ocean of conditioned existence.
When the flow of virtue and nonvirtue is interrupted,
if there is no union with and then separation from the nature
of phenomena,
there is immersion in genuine being as the definitive
and supreme secret.

One effortlessly reaches the primordial level of being,
having gained the majestic palace of dharmakaya—timeless rest.
Therefore, all things that are reified by the designation of names
and meanings,
as well as reactions based on distinctions of better or worse,
and deliberate efforts involving causality—
even as all these phenomena manifest, they are ineffable phenomena,
like space, in which nothing need be done.

For whoever understands this, all phenomena are embraced within
the larger scope of ineffability.

The decisive experience of ineffability is the ultimate heart essence.
Since all phenomena of the world of appearances and possibilities,
whether of samsara or nirvana,

are ineffable by nature, they are beyond existence.

Since the way in which they manifest is unceasing, they are
beyond nonexistence.

Since they are neither existent nor nonexistent, they are
beyond being both.

Since there is no such duality, they are beyond being neither.

Since they neither “are” nor “are not,” the ultimate heart essence
cannot be characterized as some “thing,” for it transcends all
imagination and expression.

Although the nature of phenomena is primordially pure,
immature people—unaware that what is ultimately meaningful has
nothing to do with acceptance or rejection—
are attached to their own views and so are continuously imprisoned.
How emotionally afflicted they are—their ideas reify
the characteristics of things.

How confused they are to misconstrue what is ineffable
as having identity.

How wearisome it is to reify extremes though none exist.
 How worthy of compassion are those who wander forever
 in samsara.

The sun of ultimate reality, naturally occurring awareness,
 is obscured by the clouds of both virtue and harm, positive
 and negative,
 and obstructed by the lightning of obsessive efforts to accept or reject.
 With the continuous downpour of confused perceptions of happiness
 and suffering,
 the seeds of samsara ripen into the crops of the six kinds of beings.
 Alas! How worthy of compassion are beings tormented in these
 six states.

From the consummate and ultimate perspective of the definitive
 heart essence,
 chains of gold and ropes are equally binding.
 Likewise, the spiritual and nonspiritual bind the mind equally.
 Just as light and dark clouds are equally obstructing,
 positive and negative actions equally obscure awareness.
 Therefore, it is crucial that one immersed in genuine being—
 who has realized this to be so—
 transcend all causes and effects, whether positive or negative.
 Naturally occurring timeless awareness arises from within,
 the dark night of causality is cleared away,
 and the massing clouds of virtue and harm do not amount
 to anything whatsoever—
 the sun of ultimate reality shines in the sky of the basic space
 of phenomena.

This is the decisive experience in the ultimate sense.
 The definitive conclusion is reached by virtue of the ineffable nature
 of the ten attributes.

This is superior to all spiritual approaches based on either causes
 or results.

Nonmanifest meditative absorption is beyond the range
 of meditation.

This self-knowing awareness as such, free of elaboration,
 is the decisive experience of the complete resolution of phenomena.
 Phenomena are resolved in it; it, moreover, finds its resolution
 in phenomena.

।ཡੰਦ·ਮੰਦ·ਮਹੱਤ·ਸਵੰਦ·ਵਦਸ·ਧਰ·ਸਿ·ਸਗ·ਕੰਦ॥ ।ਵੰਦ·ਘੰਨ·ਸਿ·ਨੁਸਾ·ਵਨੁਸਾ·ਧਨਸ·ਧਾਕ॥
 ।ਕੰਸ·ਤੰਡ·ਸੰਵੰਦ·ਵਦਸ·ਕਲ·ਵਤੰਦ·ਭਾਨ·ਚੰਦ·ਵਦਸ॥ ।ਵੰਦ·ਤੰਦ·ਖੰਨ·ਚੰਨ·ਕਲ·ਵਤੰਦ·ਵਦਸ॥
 ।ਵੰਦ·ਵਦ·ਵਨੁਦ·ਸਾਤੰਦ·ਕੰਸ·ਤੰਦ·ਵਦ·ਮਹੱਤ·ਸਿ·ਨੁਸਾ॥ ।ਵੰਦ·ਵਦੰਦ·ਤੰਨ·ਚੰਨ·ਵਨੁਦ·ਵਦ·ਵਨੁਦ॥
 ।ਮੀ·ਵਨੁਦ·ਸੰਵੰਦ·ਵਦਸ·ਕਲ·ਵਤੰਦ॥ ।ਵੰਦ·ਵਨੁਦ·ਘੰਨ·ਵਦੰਦ·ਤੰਨ·ਚੰਨ·ਵਦ·ਵਨੁਦ॥
 ।ਕੰਸ·ਗੁਨ·ਕੰਦ·ਤੰਦ·ਵਦਸ·ਵਦੰਦ·ਵਦਸ·ਵਦੰਦ॥ ।ਵੰਦ·ਵਨੁਦ·ਚੰਨ·ਵਦੰਦ·ਤੰਨ·ਚੰਨ·ਵਦ·ਵਨੁਦ॥
 ।ਵੰਦ·ਖੰਨ·ਵਨੁਦ·ਚੰਨ·ਵਦੰਦ·ਵਦ·ਵਨੁਦ॥ ।ਵੰਦ·ਵਨੁਦ·ਨੁਦ·ਵਦੰਦ·ਵਦ·ਵਨੁਦ·ਕੰਦ॥
 ।ਸਿ·ਨੁਦ·ਵਦ·ਵਨੁਦ·ਚੰਨ·ਵਦ·ਵਨੁਦ॥ ।ਵੰਦ·ਵਨੁਦ·ਨੁਦ·ਵਦ·ਵਨੁਦ·ਚੰਨ·ਵਦ·ਵਨੁਦ॥
 ।ਕੰਸ·ਕਲ·ਸਾ·ਤੰਦ·ਵਦ·ਵਨੁਦ·ਚੰਨ·ਵਦ·ਵਨੁਦ॥ ।ਵੰਦ·ਵਨੁਦ·ਤੰਨ·ਚੰਨ·ਵਦ·ਵਨੁਦ·ਕਲ॥
 ।ਵੰਦ·ਖੰਨ·ਵਨੁਦ·ਚੰਨ·ਵਦ·ਵਨੁਦ॥ ।ਵੰਦ·ਵਨੁਦ·ਚੰਨ·ਵਦ·ਵਨੁਦ·ਕਲ॥
 ।ਕੰਸ·ਕਲ·ਸਾ·ਤੰਦ·ਵਦ·ਵਨੁਦ·ਚੰਨ·ਵਦ·ਵਨੁਦ॥ ।ਵੰਦ·ਵਨੁਦ·ਤੰਨ·ਚੰਨ·ਵਦ·ਵਨੁਦ·ਕਲ॥
 ।ਵੰਦ·ਖੰਨ·ਵਨੁਦ·ਚੰਨ·ਵਦ·ਵਨੁਦ॥ ।ਵੰਦ·ਵਨੁਦ·ਚੰਨ·ਵਦ·ਵਨੁਦ·ਕਲ॥
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 ।ਵੰਦ·ਖੰਨ·ਵਨੁਦ·ਚੰਨ·ਵਦ·ਵਨੁਦ॥ ।ਵੰਦ·ਵਨੁਦ·ਚੰਨ·ਵਦ·ਵਨੁਦ·ਕਲ॥

Since this decisive experience has nothing to do with whether or not there is such resolution,
it is decidedly beyond characterization and expression in terms of existence or nonexistence.

There is no specific reference point, but rather a supremely spacious and panoramic state.

Phenomena are resolved, ordinary consciousness is transcended.

How joyful is one immersed in genuine being!

This very state—immersion in genuine being in the past, present, and future—

is the single basic space of enlightened intent, the uninterrupted nature of phenomena.

Masters of awareness share a dimension of experience equal to that of all victorious ones.

The noncomposite expanse—unchanging and indivisible.

The expanse of naturally occurring timeless awareness—
beyond effort and achievement.

The expanse in which all phenomena are mere names—
beyond imagination and expression.

Within this wholly positive realm, in which nothing need be done, regardless of what manifests there is still wholly positive basic space.

In this basic space of Samantabhadra, apparent phenomena
and emptiness are not better or worse.

When the ineffable is taken as existent, labeling occurs out of confusion,

yet even while there is labeling, there is no confusion or its opposite.

One comes to a decisive experience of phenomena being completely unnameable:

this is the way of abiding that is natural great perfection.

Thus, concerning the phenomena of the world of appearances
and possibilities, whether of samsara or nirvana,

with the decision that there is no question of there being confusion
or not,

nirvana is not something to be achieved by renouncing samsara.

With the decision that there is no question of things being born
or not,

one transcends objects conceived of as being born or ceasing,
as existent or not.

॥ଦ୍ୱାରା ମନ୍ତ୍ରରେ ପାଇଲା ଶକ୍ତି ଯୁଗାଶ୍ଚ ପିଣ୍ଡାଶ୍ଚ ହିଂଶୁଶ୍ଚ ଦସ୍ତା ॥ ପ୍ରତ୍ୟେ ପାଇଲା ହିଂଶୁଶ୍ଚ ପିଣ୍ଡାଶ୍ଚ ଯାନ୍ତରୁ ପାଇଲା ଦସ୍ତା ॥

ଶ୍ରୀମଦ୍-ଯଦ-କୁ-ଆ-ନ୍ତି-ପ୍ର-ଶବ୍ଦ-ମୁଦ- । ବ୍ରା-ମାତ୍ର-ଭୂ-ମୁଦ-ମାତ୍ର-ଦ୍ୱାଶ-ପ୍ରି-ଦ-ପ-ଶ୍ଵ- ।

କେବଳ କେବଳ ଏବଂ ଯଦୁଶାର୍ଦ୍ଦିଷ୍ଟାଙ୍କୁ ପରିବର୍ତ୍ତନ କରିବାକୁ ପରିଚାରିତ କରିବାକୁ ପରିଚାରିତ କରିବାକୁ

「**ਕ੍ਰਿਯਾਵਾਦ-ਨਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ** ਮੀਂ **ਨਮੀਨਾਵਾਂ** ਦਾ ਸਾਡਾ **ਨਾਲ** ਹੋਵੇਗਾ।

ଯୁଵାଶ୍ଵର-କଣ୍ଠ-ଗାନ୍ଧି-ଶ୍ଵର-ଏବି-କୁଳ-ଶିଳ୍ପୀ-ଶ୍ଵର ।

「དང.^१ ຂිසා සේවය ගුද තුළ ස්ථිර කිසා මේද පෙනා」 දී එකිනෙක නැඟැත මෘදු තුළ සුළු පෙනා ඇති

।**ଶବ୍ଦିକ୍ରମାବଳୀ** ପରିଚୟ ଓ ପରିପାଲନ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟାବଳୀ ।

॥४॥ अ॒म् ॥५॥ कृ॒ष्ण ॥६॥ ए॒र्वद् ॥७॥ कृ॒ष्णै॒श्च ॥८॥

With the decision that there is no question of whether there is purity or impurity,
there is equilibrium—nothing better or worse, no acceptance or rejection.

One has come to a decisive experience of all phenomena within the wholly positive expanse.

From *The Precious Treasury of the Way of Abiding*, this is the first topic, reaching the definitive conclusion concerning the utter inexpressibility of all phenomena.

Having come to a thorough understanding of the way of abiding as ineffability,

one reaches the definitive conclusion that its nature is openness.

The transmission of atiyoga, the very pinnacle of all spiritual approaches, is like space, without limit or center.

The greatest of the great is the spacious mind of Samantabhadra, its nature a supreme and uninterrupted evenness.

Since manifest phenomena—the world of appearances

and possibilities—and nonmanifest awakened mind

do not waver from what simply is, unembellished,

there is freedom from concepts, with no framework of limit or center.

The nature of openness abides, supreme and uninterrupted.

Even as they appear, all phenomena that manifest as objects

have no aspects or substance, and so there is expansive openness.

Moreover, mind—self-knowing awareness—is not divisible

into earlier and later

and so, just as it is, constitutes an expansive openness, like space.

With the past having ceased, the future yet to come,

and no remaining in the present, the scope of awakened mind

has no foundation or substance and transcends being an object

that can be characterized.

Natural openness is the infinite dimension of space.

In the ultimate heart essence, with no extreme or bias,

there is no framework of view, empowerment, mandala, mantra

repetition, levels, paths, samaya, training, or progress.

Rather, there is expansive openness in supreme spaciousness that is free of any basis.

This is fulfilled within awakened mind, the nature of phenomena.
 All phenomena, however they manifest,
 are sacred in being unborn by their very nature,
 and so are spontaneously present—unceasing and not abiding
 in any specific way.

Since there is total purity, free of any framework of existence
 or nonexistence,
 the nature of phenomena is expansive openness, great perfection.
 In awareness, the ultimate heart essence of enlightenment,
 there is no holding to extreme views, but rather freedom from bias
 based on characteristics.

There is no conclusion to be reached through theories of language
 or knowledge.

It is beyond characterization, can be neither affirmed nor denied,
 neither increases nor decreases, and neither comes nor goes.

Given total purity in the supreme spaciousness of spontaneous
 evenness,

there is uninterrupted openness, free of all extremes or bias.

In enlightened intent there is no occurrence of or involvement
 with hope or fear,

and so there is uninterrupted openness, regardless of what arises.

In this naturally arising, unbiased, and unrestricted state—
 what simply is—

there is never a chance of being caught within the cage of reification.

Since all things come back to openness,

their nature is beyond the extreme of denial or affirmation.

Just as the universe will disappear within the realm of space,
 denial and affirmation, attachment and aversion, vanish

in original basic space.

Since they do not go anywhere, thought patterns leave no trace.

Given expansive openness within the scope of uninterrupted
 awareness,

the limitations of holding to hope and fear are transcended.

The tethering stake of dualistic mind is pulled free.

The “city” of the confusing perceptions of samsara is emptied.

Therefore, the dynamic energy of display is external—
 phenomena that manifest as objects—

and internal—the manner in which one's mind arises.
 For those who understand everything to be timelessly empty
 and open,
 all phenomena are revealed within the key point of openness.
 Concerning the facets of the nature of phenomena, one implication
 that can be discerned
 is that they constitute self-knowing timeless awareness as openness,
 empty yet lucid.
 Not constrained by being perceived as a subject, beyond being
 perceived as an object,
 and without any point of reference, wide-open clarity is unrestricted.
 Enlightened intent—undistracted, for all recollection has been
 exhausted—
 is expansive openness like space, neither meditation
 nor nonmeditation.
 This is the vast expanse of enlightened intent, wholly positive.
 In this spacious and vast expanse of awareness, empty yet lucid,
 although an unceasing variety of characteristics arises,
 the sense faculties perceive this in all its freshness.
 Awareness is clearly evident as the nature of phenomena.
 Things appear freely, consciousness is blissful, however it arises,
 and the six modes of consciousness are relaxed—this is the naturally
 arising expanse of timeless awareness.
 Since this is utterly lucid—unobstructed, without division into outer
 or inner—
 it is spontaneously present within the supreme, uncontrived state
 of resting in genuine being.
 Like an easygoing person who has nothing more to do,
 body and mind rest in whatever way is comfortable, without tension
 or looseness.
 Awareness is an expansive openness, like the clear sky,
 abiding within the realm of the basic space of phenomena,
 not uniting with and then separating from it.
 In the skylike realization of the nature of phenomena,
 empty yet lucid,
 there is unfettered awareness—uninterrupted and expansive
 openness—

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unbound by reification, transcending all thought and recollection.
Everything is complete openness, encompassed within the single
expanse of enlightened intent.

A blissful mind blends with the blissful ground of being—
the realm of awakened mind, in which outer and inner are
of one taste.

This is to perceive the way of abiding, the nature in which
phenomena are resolved.

At the very moment that ideas form about sense impressions,
natural mind remains open, with perception blissful
and spacious.

The major implication that can be discerned is that
uninterrupted openness

is naturally radiant and naturally lucid, unconstrained
by reification.

In the spacious sky in which the reification of objects and mind
is cleared away,

awareness, free of the turmoil of thought,
is embraced within the scope of naturally unsullied openness:
the “vajra dance” is the unrestricted and uninterrupted nature
of phenomena.

Timeless awareness, equal to the basic space of suchness,
is the timeless application of the natural seal of wholly positive
enlightened intent.

Just as myriad dreams are subsumed within sleep,
being natural manifestations that are empty and without true
existence,

so too the phenomena of the universe, whether of samsara
or nirvana, are embraced by mind.

They manifest within mind, the vast expanse, but have no substance.

Just as the entire vast universe has no limit or center
in the expanse of space, but is uninterrupted openness,
so within the expanse of awareness, all that manifests outwardly
or inwardly—objects or mind—

is subsumed within openness and is naturally manifest and empty.
This is the larger scope of awakened mind that embraces
all phenomena.

Openness is revealed to be unbiased, free of dualistic perception.
 This awakened mind that embraces all phenomena, moreover,
 is without extreme or bias and is subsumed within supreme openness.
 It is like infinite space that embraces the universe,
 without limit or center, beyond all imagination or description.
 In awareness, a supreme evenness free of extremes,
 phenomena—the world of appearances and possibilities, whether
 of samsara or nirvana—arise ceaselessly.

Even as they arise, neither mind nor phenomena can be characterized
 as “things.”

They are embraced within openness, the nature of phenomena.
 The seal of awakened mind, beyond which no one goes,
 is timelessly applied through supreme and wholly positive
 spaciousness,

is embraced by the enlightened intent of the guru, protector of beings
 and spiritual master,

and is itself sealed as the ever-awakened state, the vajra heart essence.
 This definitive meaning of the supreme secret is not within the reach
 of anyone who is not of the highest intelligence and good fortune.

The theme of the vajra pinnacle is that there is no transition
 or change.

Although this vast expanse of enlightened intent—utterly lucid,
 self-knowing awareness—

is within oneself, it is difficult to always realize this.

It is seen through the grace of the guru, glorious protector
 and spiritual master.

It is termed “all phenomena embraced within uninterrupted
 openness.”

The decisive experience of openness is the ultimate heart essence.

Outer phenomena are unborn, the scope of emptiness.

They are beyond characterization or expression, since they do not
 abide in any specific way and neither come nor go.

There is no division between inner phenomena arising and being free.

They are like the traces of a bird in the sky—no frame of reference
 applies.

Objects and mind, just as they are—and even naturally occurring
 awareness—

। ପାଦ-ଶକ୍ତିପ୍ରିଦ୍ୟ-ପଦ-ଧର୍ମ-ଶ୍ଵର-ପଦୀ-ଦ୍ୱା । । ପ୍ରିଦ୍ୟ-କେବଳିଦ୍ୟ-ପଦ-ଧର୍ମ-ଶ୍ଵର-ପଦୀ-ଶକ୍ତିପଦୀ ।
 । ଶ୍ରୀ-ରଷ୍ମୀ-ପଦ-ଧର୍ମ-ଶ୍ଵର-ଶକ୍ତିକୁ-ପଦୀ-ପଦୀ । । ଯଦୁଦ୍ୟ-ଶ୍ରୁତି-ଶ୍ରୀ-ପଦୀ-ଶ୍ଵର-ପଦୀ-ଶ୍ରୀ ।
 । କର୍ତ୍ତା-ଧର୍ମ-ଶକ୍ତି-ପଦୀ-ଶ୍ଵର-ଧର୍ମ-ଶ୍ଵର-ପଦୀ । । ପଶୁଧର୍ମ-ଶକ୍ତି-ପଦୀ-ଧର୍ମ-ଶକ୍ତିପଦୀ ।
 । ଶ୍ରୀ-ଶ୍ରୀଶାର୍ଣ୍ଣା-ପଦ-କର୍ତ୍ତା-ପଦ-ଶକ୍ତିପଦୀ ।

are mere labels and beyond characterization or expression.
 They are free of elaboration.
 Since, as with space, there is no creator, this is the realm of emptiness,
 involving no effort or achievement,
 beyond good or bad, positive or negative, and beyond causality.
 The ten attributes do not apply.
 Completely spacious openness, the expanse free of characterization or
 expression,
 is timelessly empty, with no question of its being a phenomenon
 or not.
 It does not partake of existence.
 In great perfection, free of ordinary consciousness,
 one comes to a decisive experience of the inconceivable
 and inexpressible nature.

From *The Precious Treasury of the Way of Abiding*, this is the second topic, reaching the definitive conclusion concerning the supreme and uninterrupted openness of all phenomena.

Furthermore, the nature of spontaneous presence
 is not created by anyone, for it abides timelessly.
 Like a gem that provides everything, awakened mind
 serves as the ground that is the source of all phenomena of samsara
 and nirvana.
 Just as the world of appearances and possibilities manifests
 from the realm of space,
 samsara and nirvana arise ceaselessly from awakened mind.
 Just as various dreams occur during sleep,
 the six kinds of beings and the three realms arise within the context
 of ordinary mind.
 Even as they arise, all phenomena constitute the scope of awareness.
 They are the supreme manifestation of the ground of being—
 empty yet spontaneously present.
 Moreover, the ground of being and the mode by which it arises
 as apparent phenomena
 are by nature beyond being identical or separate
 and are timelessly and spontaneously present, arising through
 the avenue of awareness.

As the dynamic energy of its display, the two modes—samsara and nirvana—manifest distinctly as impure and pure, yet even in manifesting neither is better or worse, for they are of one basic space.

When lights of five colors shine without obstruction from a crystal, these lights are perceived as distinct colors, yet none is better or worse.

They are the dynamic energy of a single crystal sphere.

Self-knowing awareness, the ground of being, is similar to that crystal sphere:

its emptiness is the nature of dharmakaya,

its naturally radiant lucidity is sambhogakaya,

and its unceasing avenue as the ground for arising is nirmanakaya.

The three kayas are spontaneously present in basic space as the ground of being.

From that ground, its manifestation arises as apparent phenomena, and even as it does there are the three pure kayas, manifesting

naturally to victorious ones,

and all the impure appearances of the universe.

Its very essence is threefold—emptiness, lucidity, and diversity—the display of dharmakaya, sambhogakaya, and nirmanakaya.

These three kayas—the dynamic display of the ground of being as it manifests—

are naturally manifest and spontaneously present, not to be sought elsewhere.

Having come to thoroughly understand these distinctions, you should realize that, within the realm of awakened mind, the phenomena of samsara and nirvana are the spontaneously present pure realm of the three kayas.

The kayas and timeless awareness of buddhas throughout the three times,

the body, speech, and mind of beings in the three realms, karma and afflictive emotions—

of all these phenomena of the world of appearances and possibilities, none is anything other than awakened mind.

Within the expanse of spontaneous presence is the ground from which everything comes.

All that manifests as form—the outer environment and the beings
within it—

is enlightened form that is not defined by extremes, arising
as continuous adornment.

Sounds and voices, whether heard as excellent, average, or inferior,
are enlightened speech that is not defined by extremes, arising
as continuous adornment.

All timeless awareness and ordinary mind, all realization and lack
of realization,

are enlightened mind that is not defined by extremes, arising
as continuous adornment.

Since positive qualities and enlightened activity occur without being
defined by extremes,

the basic space of phenomena is a precious gem that fulfills all wishes.
Without having to be sought, everything occurs naturally.

This is “naturally occurring timeless awareness, spontaneously
present.”

The spontaneously present ground of myriad phenomena
is awakened mind, which is always spontaneously present,
so the three kayas, unsought, are innately present as natural qualities.
Since effort—which creates causes and effects, whether positive
or negative—is unnecessary,

immerse yourself in genuine being, resting naturally with nothing
needing to be done.

The expanse of spontaneous presence entails no deliberate effort,
no acceptance or rejection.

From now on make no effort, since phenomena already are what
they are.

Even the enlightenment of all victorious ones of the three times
is spontaneously present as a supremely blissful state of natural rest.
So, without depending on teachings of causality that are for less
fortunate ones,

look to the nature that is like space, in which nothing need be done.

Given what is, there is no need to create anything further.

So, in supreme spontaneous presence, uncontrived as it has
always been,

cut through all occurrence of and involvement with the hope and fear
of ordinary mind

and gain knowledge in basic space, spontaneous presence that need not be sought.

All phenomena, however they manifest,
are the display of dharmakaya, sambhogakaya, and nirmanakaya—the three uncontrived aspects of essence, nature, and responsiveness. Samsara and nirvana are the three kayas, the expanse
of awakened mind,
spontaneously present in uncontrived supreme evenness,
and so samsara is not to be renounced, nor is nirvana to be achieved.
With the pacification of all value judgments, there is abiding
in the ultimate heart essence.

This reveals all phenomena within the key point,
the realm of awakened mind, timelessly and spontaneously present.
Phenomena are discerned within the context of spontaneous
presence.

The five great elements and all apparent phenomena of the universe
arise timelessly as the expression of nonconceptual spontaneous
presence.

Involving no concept of self or other and pure in their natural
vividness,

they are discerned within the context of natural mind, free of
deliberate effort.

Do not suppress objects that manifest.

Rest with the six modes of consciousness relaxed.

Awareness, the origin of everything, is spontaneously present
with a lucid radiance.

One implication of the five senses being uncontrived, without the
coming and going of thoughts,

is that spontaneous presence as enlightened intent is dharmakaya,
the simultaneity of awareness and emptiness.

Recognize this, be decisive, and rest free of elaboration.

In the pure vast expanse of self-knowing awareness,
free of restriction,

one implication of the uninterrupted evenness of everything that
manifests, whether objects or mind,
can be discerned within the “interval” of spontaneous presence—
natural meditative stability.

At all times, like the course of a great river,
timeless awareness—not cultivated in meditation, but spontaneously
present—is uninterrupted.

The heart essence of all phenomena, the primordial expanse that
occurs naturally,
reaches full measure as ultimate enlightened intent, wholly positive.
The source of phenomena is awakened mind;
awakened mind is similar to space, the universal metaphor.
Everything is contained within the expanse of space and is pure
by nature,
without this entailing effort or achievement.

Similarly, all outer and inner phenomena, being spontaneously
present,
are discerned within the context of the supreme state
of imperturbable rest in the face of whatever manifests,
which is beyond all objects of the imagination and does not require
that anything be done.

Completely encompassing the enlightened intent of victorious ones
just as it is—
not coming into being or ceasing, not coming or going,
and so forth—

spontaneous presence is pure and unwavering meditative absorption.
All phenomena are discerned within the context of nothing needing to
be done.

All phenomena are embraced within the larger scope of spontaneous
presence.

The entire world of appearances and possibilities is naturally manifest
and spontaneously present,
all samsara and nirvana is spontaneously present as the display,
and awakened mind is timelessly and spontaneously present,
so all phenomena are nothing other than spontaneous presence.
Because the nature of mind is spontaneously present,
the fundamental ground, the heart essence, is encompassed within
awakened mind.

Unsought through the ten attributes, it is spontaneously present,
so there is no need to try to develop view, meditation, or meditative
absorption,

no need to accomplish anything else through the usual process
of causality,

no need for the turmoil of hope and fear to arise.

The immediacy of spontaneous presence truly is primordial
dharmakaya.

In the vast expanse of the nature of mind, the unchanging realm
of space,

although samsara and nirvana arise naturally from the expanse
of the three kayas,

they never waver from the expanse of the three kayas.

The display is indeterminate—a treasury of the magical expression
of responsiveness.

Since everything arises as a single state of wholly positive spontaneous
presence,

there is mastery over samsara and nirvana, for nothing wavers
in the slightest from basic space.

Since everything is wholly positive—there is nothing that is not
positive—

the basic space of the vajra heart essence is the spontaneous presence
of everything.

All phenomena are forever embraced within the larger scope
of spontaneous presence.

The decisive experience is, by its nature, that of spontaneous
presence.

Within that spontaneous presence, which has no specific nature
and cannot be divided into outer or inner,

all phenomena manifest naturally, are neither confirmed nor refuted,
neither come nor go.

The infinite expanse has no division into above or below.

It is thoroughly indeterminate and completely unrestricted.

It cannot be characterized as some “thing,” for it is inexpressible
and beyond imagining.

Because phenomena are originally pure in essence

and spontaneously present by their very nature,

they are free of the limitations of the four alternatives—
existence, nonexistence, affirmation, or denial.

This is the nature of nondual awakened mind.

Original purity in its essence has never existed as anything;
rather, its nature, like that of space, is primordially pure.

Spontaneous presence in its essence has not been created by anyone;
rather, its mode of arising is unceasing, so that anything whatsoever
can manifest.

The origin of all samsara and nirvana is atemporal, with no beginning
or end.

Spontaneous presence, unborn and indeterminate, is the ultimate
ground of being.

The way things arise, without beginning or end, cannot be
suppressed.

The way things are, without beginning or end, has no frame
of reference.

The way things are freed, ineffable by nature, is uninterrupted.

Following the point at which things arise, one comes to
a decisive experience.

This is known as “dissolution into dharmakaya—resolution
within the ground of being as basic space.”

Just as clouds occurring in the sky dissolve therein
and the light from a crystal disappears into the crystal,
so all of samsara and nirvana—the manifestation of the ground
of being that arises from that ground—
holds to its own place of original purity within the essence,
the ground of being.

The supreme decisive experience concerning all phenomena
is that they are encompassed within basic space—
spontaneous presence as the natural place of rest.

All elaborations dissolve naturally in the nonconceptual expanse.
With the dissolution of the six modes of consciousness within their
natural place of rest, dharmakaya,
whatever appears at present—all that manifests as objects—
is a single evenness outwardly and inwardly, experienced decisively
within the basic space of spontaneous presence.

One comes to the ultimate decisive experience of everything—
whether of samsara or nirvana, whether naturally manifest
or even nonmanifest—
within the fully awakened state of enlightenment.

। ॥८-क्ष-मठेषा-सुवि-८८-वलिक-वश्व-पवी ॥ रेषा-ष-मठेषा-दु-क्ष-क्ष-वश्व-गुरु-मृ-वलि
। ८५-क्ष-श्व-८८-वलिक-वश्व-वापेष-विषा ॥ ८८-वूरु-८८-वेषा-क्ष-ष-मठेषा-नु-वश्व-का
। ८६-भूरु-क्ष-सु-वलिक-व्य-विदि-८८-क्षा ॥ क्ष-विदि-क्ष-त्रिषा-व-८८-श्व-८८-व्य-८८ ॥

In the same way, one comes to the moment-by-moment decisive experience of what is innately pristine, empty yet lucid, by letting the busyness of apparent phenomena and mind rest naturally in the lucid expanse, so that there is utter relaxation, nonconceptual and free of elaboration.

This is “abiding firmly within the precious enclosure.”

If you do not come to a decisive experience now in basic space, the natural place of rest, freedom in the original ground of being will not come about in the future.

Rigid meditative stability, with no freedom in the ground of being as basic space, affords no chance to attain liberation, only rebirth as a god in a higher realm.

Thus, it is crucial to come to a decisive experience—an instantaneous and naturally abiding meditative absorption—within inner basic space, now and in the future.

One comes to a decisive experience of all possible phenomena in the spontaneous presence of awareness.

One comes to a decisive experience of spontaneous presence in its natural place of rest, supreme original purity.

One comes to a decisive experience of original purity—inconceivable, unimaginable, and inexpressible.

This is the decisive experience of spontaneous presence.

From *The Precious Treasury of the Way of Abiding*, this is the third topic, reaching the definitive conclusion concerning the timeless and spontaneous presence of all phenomena.

Next, the nature of oneness is revealed.

Awareness—oneness—is the ground of all phenomena.

Although there is the appearance of multiplicity, to say that there is no wavering from oneness

is to say that naturally occurring timeless awareness is the single source.

Although fire and water manifest separately from a single gem under specific circumstances,

| ཀ·བ·ག·ଡ·ସ·ଶ୍ରୀ·ସୈନ୍ଦ୍ର·ନ୍ତା·ପ·ବିକା | ଇନ୍ଦ୍ର·ରୀଣା·ଗଠିଷ·ପଶ·ଦର୍ଶ·ଦନ୍ତ·ମନ୍ତ୍ରିଷ·ଏତ୍ୟଦ୍ |
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their source—the pure gem—is the same.

Similarly, although both samsara and nirvana arise from oneness,
self-knowing awareness,

their source—ultimate awakened mind—is the same.

There is simply the illusion of difference based on whether
or not awareness is recognized.

All things that appear in light of awareness—
the world of appearances and possibilities, whether of samsara
or nirvana—

even as they manifest are one in emptiness, their very essence.

Like dream images, illusions, or the moon's reflection on water,
like awareness in the four visions, and like surrounding space that
has no substance,

they are one in being timelessly and totally empty, free of
elaboration.

Since everything is of one basic space, primordially pure,
there is no abiding as "two," for all is encompassed within
the single sphere.

Dharmakaya is without edges or corners. How marvelous!

Although the five elements manifest, they are the realm
of awakened mind.

Never born, they do not waver from the single state of equalness.

Although manifesting in conditioned existence, the six kinds
of beings are forms of emptiness.

The ground of being as it manifests does not waver from the scope
of awareness.

Although happiness and suffering manifest, they are within the heart
essence of enlightenment,

not wavering from a single, naturally occurring timeless awareness.

Therefore, phenomena are of one basic space—the realm
of emptiness.

You should know them to be unborn awakened mind.

The unique enlightened intent of victorious ones of the three times
dwells within this ultimate basic space, the vast expanse
of self-knowing awareness.

It cannot be thought of as multiple, for it is free of fragmenting
elaborations.

Truly it is the palace of the unwavering heart essence
 of enlightenment,
 where nothing but naturally occurring timeless awareness dwells.
 The precious treasury of phenomena is a gem that fulfills all wishes.
 This is truly the pure realm of victorious ones, the three
 spontaneously present kayas.
 The unique vast expanse is not created by anyone.
 All things that emerge from it—all possible phenomena without
 exception—
 are one within the fundamental ground from which they emerge, since
 causality is negated.
 Suchness itself, empty yet lucid, is the supremely spacious nature
 of phenomena,
 evident as pure space without extremes or biases.
 Although the single naturally occurring state creates all samsara
 and nirvana,
 without anyone creating awareness, which is the source,
 it abides like space, beyond deliberate effort.
 With this metaphor and its underlying meaning in harmony,
 all value judgments concerning diverse phenomena
 are pacified within the vast expanse of a single basic space.
 Within the ultimate heart essence, which transcends existence
 and nonexistence,
 all phenomena are unceasing, and regardless of the display that arises
 their very essence is the unimaginable and inexpressible expanse.
 This is truly beyond all conventional expression and description.
 From the standpoint of enlightenment, the heart essence from which
 everything arises,
 there is no duality, and any attempt to quantify things would be
 endless.
 Buddhas, ordinary beings, and the universe of appearances
 and possibilities are evident,
 yet do not waver from the single nature of phenomena, just as it is.
 Everything is connected in oneness—the perfection of phenomena.
 This is the supreme quality of awakened mind.
 When anything manifests, cut through all conventional exaggeration.
 All outer phenomena are to be known as the inherent radiance
 of the nature of mind, empty and nondual,

while inner phenomena are nothing other than awareness as such.
 Within the nature of phenomena, nonexistent as one or many,
 the realization of a single basic space is revealed to be the key point
 of awareness.

One implication that can be discerned is that all phenomena
 are of one taste.

All apparent objects are unreal appearances—the realm of emptiness.
 Regardless of how things appear, rest within what is singularly
 uncontrived.

The unique simultaneity of emptiness and lucidity arises
 in the immediacy of whatever manifests.

All thought patterns involving ordinary mind and apparent
 phenomena fade away naturally—the realm of emptiness.

However the mind stirs, rest gently in utter relaxation.

The nature of phenomena is evident as enlightened intent
 in the immediacy of the mind stirring and thoughts proliferating.

In the natural context of evenness, with no split between objects
 and mind,

rest free of any framework, with naturally pristine perception
 that leaves no trace.

Timeless awareness—profound insight—is evident within the
 ultimate state of innate lucidity.

With the implications of three essential points being discerned
 within a single heart essence—

that of evenness that is timeless whether or not there is realization,
 that of evenness in dharmakaya with no duality of objects and mind,
 and that of evenness within enlightened intent with neither error
 nor obscuration—

the ultimate and natural place is held without interruption.

With nothing discarded or adopted, the definitive heart essence
 is discovered.

With no coming or going, there is abiding in enlightened intent—
 the nature of phenomena.

There is fulfillment on the level that is without transition or change.
 Spacious, supreme—the enlightened mind of victorious ones,
 equal to space.

No renunciation or attainment—the expanse of a single sphere.

Freedom in its own place—no question of whether or not
there is realization.

The point of resolution is reached—expansion into openness
that transcends ordinary mind.

From the pinnacle of the victory banner that never falls
shine the sun and moon that illuminate the entire universe.

All phenomena are embraced within a single self-knowing awareness.
Even though they arise as the totality of samsara and nirvana,
the phenomena of the world of appearances and possibilities—
limitless, boundless—arise from basic space.

Therefore, they are subsumed within the basic space from which they
first arise.

Even as myriad things appear, they do not stray from the scope
of awareness,
so these apparent phenomena are embraced within the expanse
of that naturally occurring awareness.

Although subsiding in basic space, with no distinction between their
arising and being freed,
they are nothing other than awakened mind,
and so are embraced by the single primordial nature in which
phenomena are resolved.

Therefore, all phenomena are embraced within a single awareness.
The ultimate heart essence, without transition or change,
is embraced within the very heart of enlightenment,
unwavering awareness.

It is fully encompassed as that which is unchanging
and noncomposite.

Within oneness, the decisive experience is that of naturally occurring
timeless awareness itself.

Basic space is without beginning or end.

Everything is complete therein; all elaborations completely subside.

All phenomena abide in the ultimate heart essence, the nature
of phenomena.

In this way, outer objects and inner mind—the phenomena
of samsara and nirvana—
are free of fragmenting elaborations that distinguish coarse
from subtle.

|| རྒྱྲୟ ཡଦ୍ୱା ຂଣ ପରିଚିନ୍ତନ ଦ୍ୱାରା । ଶିଖିତାମାଯି ପରିଚିନ୍ତନ ଦ୍ୱାରା ଶିଖିତାମାଯି
ପରିଚିନ୍ତନ ଦ୍ୱାରା ସମ୍ପଦ କରିବାକୁ ପରିଚିନ୍ତନ ଦ୍ୱାରା । ଶିଖିତାମାଯି ପରିଚିନ୍ତନ ଦ୍ୱାରା ଶିଖିତାମାଯି

One comes to this decisive experience within basic space,
timelessly empty like the sky.

Even awakened mind, if analyzed, has no substance.

It is without origination or duration, does not come or go,
cannot be characterized, and is beyond expression.

Since one comes to this decisive experience within the expanse
of enlightened intent that surpasses ordinary mind,
there is no substance with characteristics that can be defined
as some "thing."

There is nothing to be known through language or expressed
in words.

Within the vast expanse—unnameable and free of elaboration—
one comes to a decisive experience of the phenomena
of the world of appearances and possibilities, whether of samsara
or nirvana.

Within the vast expanse—the unborn simultaneity of awareness
and emptiness—

one comes to a decisive experience concerning the phenomena
of one's own self-knowing awareness.

Within the vast expanse—which has nothing to do with the
recognition or nonrecognition of awareness—

one comes to a decisive experience concerning the phenomena
of awakened mind.

Within the vast expanse—with no transition or change throughout
the three times—

one comes to a decisive experience concerning timelessly and totally
empty phenomena.

From *The Precious Treasury of the Way of Abiding*, this is the fourth
topic, reaching the definitive conclusion concerning the oneness of all
phenomena within awareness—timeless awareness—as their source.

Thus, this quintessential nectar of the most profound spiritual
approach

should be revealed only to individuals who are definitely
of the highest intelligence and good fortune,
not to those who follow lesser spiritual approaches, those biased
toward causality,

or those whose intelligence and good fortune are limited.
 Those who revile the guru, feel anger toward their spiritual siblings,
 violate the bounds of what is secret and proclaim it publicly,
 have no faith, are avaricious, are of ignoble character,
 and fixate on things of this life—keep what is secret from them.
 Fortunate people of the very highest caliber are candidates
 for the Great Perfection.

Teach it to them, for they respect the guru, have sublime knowledge
 in abundance,

are spacious and forbearing, have a great capacity for generosity,
 have little attraction to dualistic thinking,
 have given up concerns with this life, strive to attain enlightenment,
 have faith and diligence, and can maintain secrecy.

For their part, they please the guru with gifts
 and, having already committed themselves, make a wholehearted
 request.

Once this has been granted, they will practice appropriately
 and reach resolution on the level of the way of abiding.

Moreover, the guru, who has heard many teachings
 and perfected positive qualities,

examines all candidates, bestows the key points gradually
 while keeping them very secret from those who are not
 suitable candidates,

applies the seal of command, and strictly conceals these points
 with the seal of trust.

Teachings on the heart essence of definitive meaning are entrusted
 to fortunate heart children of the very highest caliber.

They, in turn, do not disseminate this infallible ultimate heart essence
 to everyone,

but hold it to be their own infallible heart essence.

If the bounds of secrecy are violated, the injunction is broken
 and, owing to misinterpretation, the teachings on the heart essence
 will disappear.

Therefore, maintain their secrecy and assimilate them in a peaceful
 and happy frame of mind.

Dharmakaya, a majestic state of authentic being, will be gained
 in this lifetime.

ସାକ୍ଷରାମାନୁଷ୍ଠାନୀକାରୀଙ୍କରେ ପାଇଁ ତେଣୁ ପ୍ରମାଣ ଦେଇଲାମାନୁଷ୍ଠାନୀ ଏହାରେ ପାଇଁ ପରିଚୟ ଦେଇଲାମାନୁଷ୍ଠାନୀ ଏହାରେ ପରିଚୟ

॥୬୩୩॥ ॥୬୩୩॥ ॥୬୩୩॥

From *The Precious Treasury of the Way of Abiding*, this is the fifth topic, reaching the definitive conclusion concerning the types of individuals to whom these teachings may be imparted.

These teachings thus make fully evident the ultimate meaning of the sublimely secret great perfection, so that it is no longer elusive. May they free all beings without exception, effortlessly and naturally, within primordial basic space as the ground of being.

These teachings, which thoroughly shatter the furthest reaches
of one's view,

are the very pinnacle of spiritual approaches—the basic space
of the great and majestic garuda,

the transmission of atiyoga, exalted above all.

May this victory banner never fall, but unfold throughout
the ten directions.

Completely embraced within three categories, nine expanses,
and four themes,

the definitive meaning is found in sixteen topics of teachings.

This detailed explanation, *The Precious Treasury of the Way
of Abiding*,

was composed in an excellent manner by the good

Longchen Rabjam.

The definitive meaning, the five chapters of this “treasure house
of the way of abiding,”

is well adorned with a wealth both vast and profound.

May this treatise, made lovely by a vivid array of words
and meanings, bring joy to hosts of fortunate people.

This concludes *The Precious Treasury of the Way of Abiding*, composed by Longchen Rabjam, one immersed in genuine being through the most majestic of spiritual approaches.

Good fortune! Good fortune! Good fortune!

The Exposition of the Quintessential Meaning of the Three Categories

ଅଶ୍ରୁଷୁଦ୍ଧିକୁ ପାଇଁ ଦ୍ଵାରା ବସନ୍ତ ଯୁଗରେ ହେଲା ଏହାର ପାଇଁ ।

THE COMMENTARY

In Sanskrit: *Tri senā garbhā nāmartha vṛtti stathātva ratnasya kosa nāma vṛtti*

ଶ୍ରୀଶ୍ରୀକୃଷ୍ଣା । ଶ୍ରୀକୃଷ୍ଣାମୁଖୀ ।

In Tibetan: *sDe gsum snying po'i don 'grel*
gNas lugs rin po che'i mdzod ces bya ba'i 'grel pa

Introduction

In the language of India, the short title of this treatise would be *Tathātva ratna koṣa nāma vṛtti*; in the language of Tibet, it is *gNas lugs rin po che'i mdzod ces bya ba'i 'grel pa* (A Commentary on the Precious Treasury of the Way of Abiding).

Homage to glorious Samantabhadra!

To the original protector, the splendor of both conditioned
existence and the state of peace—
the primordially and spontaneously present expanse in which
all qualities are perfect—
and to victorious ones, to masters of awareness, and to gurus
who are masters of the teachings,
I pay homage, my deep faith like a lotus with a thousand
petals stirring.

I will compose an illuminating commentary on *The Precious
Treasury of the Way of Abiding*,
the definitive and consummate meaning that distills
the essential points
from the vast range of secret instructions that are the heart drop
approach of direct experience—
the very pinnacle of all spiritual approaches.

Glorious Samantabhadra, when awakening to fully evident enlightenment in the original ground of all phenomena, dwells as vajra basic space in a mode of supreme evenness. Of all the turnings of the unsurpassable wheel of dharma concerning the definitive meaning, the most

sublime fruition is the supreme secret that, in one's direct experience, reveals awareness—awakened mind, dharmakaya, suchness that is without transition or change, which is not something to be confirmed or refuted—to be beyond cause and effect, effort and achievement. This treatise of pith instructions, entitled *The Precious Treasury of the Way of Abiding*, summarizes the definitive topics concerning the consummation of that secret.

In elucidating the topics in this text, I begin here with the salutation:

Primordial buddhahood, the ground of fully evident
enlightenment,
unchanging, spontaneously present, the basic space
of the vajra heart essence—
the nature of mind is natural great perfection.
I pay homage to this, with nothing to discard or adopt,
nothing to come or go.

This stanza conclusively defines vajra basic space as it is referred to in this treatise, demonstrating that homage is offered in a manner that is free of discarding or adopting, complicating or simplifying anything, without wavering from the nature of phenomena, the natural place of rest. It is offered within the very essence of great perfection—the ultimate essence, naturally occurring timeless awareness, buddhahood as the spontaneously present ground of being, the unchanging basic space of phenomena, the nature of mind that is utterly lucid by its very nature.

In this regard, naturally occurring timeless awareness—great perfection—is beyond all restrictions or extremes, beyond any confirmation or refutation, any effort or achievement. *The Tantra of Supreme and Naturally Arising Awareness* states:

How marvelous!
Ati, great perfection, does not fall into any extreme
and so embraces the ultimate meaning of naturally occurring
timeless awareness.
For example, just as the carnivorous lion awes other predators
with its majesty,
so the Great Perfection speaks its own language and awes inferior
approaches with its majesty.

The Great Perfection speaks its own language and relies
on its own ultimate meaning.

In the scope of great perfection, there are neither buddhas
nor ordinary beings.

In great perfection, the ground of being is neither good nor bad.

In great perfection, the spiritual path is neither long nor short.

In great perfection, fruition is neither attainment
nor nonattainment.

In great perfection, enlightened form neither “is” nor “is not.”

In great perfection, enlightened speech is neither changeable
nor unchanging.

In great perfection, enlightened mind has no substance
or characteristics.

In great perfection, basic space does not dissipate
or become void.

In great perfection, there is no location that is either high or low.

In great perfection, conduct is neither spiritual nor nonspiritual.

In great perfection, dynamic energy cannot be perfected,
nor is it imperfect.

In great perfection, display is not a matter of something
arising or not.

In great perfection, ultimately there is no meditation
or nonmeditation.

In great perfection, awareness is neither exalted nor otherwise.

In great perfection, the supreme secret of timeless awareness
displays itself as everything.

In great perfection, there is no limit that can be characterized
as some “thing.”

In great perfection, there are no words or letters for its ultimate
meaning.

Great perfection is the majestic view of abiding in suchness itself.

Engage in the ultimate meaning of great perfection,
which entails no words or letters.

The force of bliss is naturally manifest, involving no reifying
thoughts of whether it is evident or obscured.

In actuality, great perfection does not abide in any specific way.

In the earlier quotation from my *Treasury*, the first three lines demonstrate this naturally occurring and fundamentally unconditioned essence, while the fourth demonstrates the means of becoming adept within its scope. The fruition is shown to be the natural place of rest

that is fundamentally unconditioned. No goal exists, only a certain distinction that is made on the basis of gaining stability in the primary ground of being, and so all phenomena are shown to be perfect within awareness—awakened mind. *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

This is not lacking in perfection in any way whatsoever.

Since there is perfection in one, perfection in two, perfection
in everything,

there is ease in the abundance of fresh possibilities.

There is perfection in one—perfection in awakened mind.

There is perfection in two—perfection in what is produced
by ordinary mind.

There is perfection in everything—perfection in this abundance.

According to this transmission concerning the perfection in one,
the enlightened intent of buddhahood abides herein.

The ultimate meaning of perfection in everything is that complete
abundance is ensured.

Although those who dwell in this state in which nothing
need be done

may physically be ordinary individuals such as gods and humans,
their intent is in accord with the nature of phenomena—
they are buddhas.

In ensuring the welfare of beings, they make no effort and there is
nothing to achieve;
rather, they abide blissfully.

The nature of mind, this naturally occurring timeless awareness, the ground from which samsara and nirvana unfold, is shown to be the object of homage. *The Treasury of Songs of Realization* states:

The nature of mind alone is the seed of everything.

Anything in conditioned existence or nirvana unfolds from it.

Homage to mind, which is like the wish-fulfilling gem
that grants the fruition of one's desires.

My commitment to compose this treatise is as follows:

The expanse of the inexpressible nature of phenomena,
the very pinnacle of view, is great perfection.

Listen as I explain, according to my realization,

the meaningfulness of that which transcends everything
and is unlike anything else.

That is to say, the expanse that is the nature of phenomena, beyond imagination and expression, is that of awareness—awakened mind, great perfection. Since it has no substance or characteristics, it even transcends being some object that could be illustrated through metaphor. For the sake of future generations, I vow to demonstrate this ultimate meaning, which I have realized thoroughly through the grace of my holy gurus.

This work concerns the nature of mind, which is beyond cause and effect, effort and achievement, and which cannot be understood through inferior spiritual approaches. It is pure, for error and obscuration need not be renounced, yet it does not dwell within these. It is further shown that all phenomena can be understood to be mere labels. *The Direct Encounter with the Three Kayas*, composed by the great master Garab Dorjé, states:

The vast expanse, in which nothing need be done, is not limited
by origination or cessation.

Like the Isle of Gold, this expanse entails no differentiation
or exclusion.

Neither external nor internal, it arises yet never subsides.

Awakened mind is the source that dispels the gloom
of limitations.

Within awakened mind the four limitations are not renounced,
yet it is unaffected by these limitations, and so pitfalls are
inevitably traversed.

Within awakened mind itself, devoid of such chasms,
the three kayas, which entail no effort, are spontaneously perfect,
whereas samsara and nirvana are mere labels,
imputed by holding causes and effects to be distinct from
one another.

I began this work with a statement of these points because my thought was to benefit those of the very highest acumen, who would thereby become free just as I intended. Since my larger commitment remains unchanged, however, I will continue this treatise to its conclusion. *The Major Commentary on the Eight Thousand Stanzas* states:

Those who hold others' welfare dear would not let their energy slacken, even for the sake of their own lives.
 Spiritual people who bear a burden never throw it off in difficult times.

This discussion also fulfills the four requirements of any commentary on enlightened intent. The subject matter of this treatise is awakened mind—awareness that is beyond imagination and expression, beyond cause and effect. The primary purpose of this treatise is to present this so that those of the very highest acumen can realize it just as it is. The secondary, or further, purpose is to arrive at this fundamentally unconditioned state in its immediacy, through practical application that is in harmony with such realization. The internal consistency lies in the fact that the latter purpose relies on the former.

Therefore, given that everything manifests within the scope of awareness, *The All-Creating Monarch* speaks of the fact that this spiritual approach is superior to all lower approaches because of the realization that this awareness is beyond causality or deliberate effort:

I am awakened mind, the all-creating monarch.
 Since you realize my nature,
 proclaim the fact that all phenomena,
 however they manifest, do not exist as something other than me.
 Should you utter this proclamation of mine,
 all the hosts of retinues who gather around you
 will realize my nature as the all-creating one,
 so for them everything will be my own nature.
 Since everything is my nature,
 do not renounce or suppress any phenomena,
 however they manifest.
 Do not train in the two levels of truth.
 Do not perform the consecration of threefold purity through
 ritual cleansing.
 Do not engage in meditative absorption, deliberate arousal
 of motivation, effort, or achievement.
 Since everything is already ensured within my all-creating
 embrace,
 everything is equal in me, the all-creating one.
 There is no need for me—equality itself—to create equality.

I have already proclaimed that there is no need to create equalness.

The same text speaks of the purpose of such realization:

As for revealing the specific and ultimate purpose:
countless eons ago, those who had faith in me,
all-creating enlightenment—
those with suitable karma and good fortune, utterly immersed
in genuine being—
had no view to cultivate in meditation, no samaya to uphold,
no enlightened activity involving effort, no paths to traverse,
no levels of realization on which to train, no causal framework,
no twofold division into ultimate and relative,
nothing to cultivate in meditation or achieve,
no motivation to be aroused and no antidotes.
So that they might perceive the nature of all-creating mind,
I revealed it for just this purpose.

With this I have concluded my presentation of the first part of my work—the reasons for undertaking to write this treatise.

The Vajra Premise

Now, my treatise will explain the subject matter extensively, beginning with a concise presentation of the main body of the text through four vajra themes:

For the categories of Mind, Expanse, and Direct Transmission,
the consummate meaning of the heart essence
is that of ineffability, openness, spontaneous presence,
and oneness.

Each of these has four divisions: revealing the key point,
discerning the implications,
embracing the larger scope, and coming to the decisive
experience.

The consummate meaning of natural great perfection is demonstrated by considering all phenomena under the headings of the “four great samayas.” All phenomena are by nature ineffable. They are timelessly and spontaneously present. They are open, in that they are not defined by restrictions or extremes. And they are encompassed within oneness—naturally occurring timeless awareness. *The Tantra of Heaped Jewels* states:

At that point, samaya is beyond any boundaries to be observed.
Supreme spontaneous presence, ineffability, oneness,
and openness—
these are its mainstays.

And *The All-Illuminating Sphere* states:

The four samayas, which cannot be observed,
are nonetheless unimpaired, timelessly upheld, and embody
indwelling confidence.

As for these secret samayas of mine,
in supreme and self-knowing timeless awareness
there is neither something to be upheld nor someone to uphold it,
and so there is neither impairment nor lack of impairment.

Since I do not follow the contrived lists of rules
in the eight spiritual approaches, there is the term “ineffability.”
Since there is freedom from the samayas of lower approaches
and one’s body, speech, and mind are spacious,
the term “openness” is used.

Without even the possibility of transgression,
the means of upholding the samaya that cannot be observed
lies in the oneness of self-knowing timeless awareness,
and so the term “oneness” is used.

In the oneness of self-knowing timeless awareness,
there is total observance that involves no deliberate effort,
and so the term “spontaneous presence” is used.

And *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

In me, the all-creating one, there is no samaya to be upheld.
Since there are no causes or conditions, there is no need
for either effort or achievement.

Since there is spontaneous presence, there is no need to analyze.
Since there is timeless awareness, there is no need for anything
to be known.

Since this is naturally occurring, causes and conditions are
unnecessary.

Since there is no better or worse, there is no need to accept
or reject.

Since there is no substance, this is explained as “ineffability.”
Not involving substance, timeless awareness is unceasing;
the term “openness” refers to this.

Everything is one within mind; this demonstrates “oneness.”
Because all phenomena, however they manifest,
are phenomena of mind—perfect in awakened mind—
I explain them as being “spontaneously present.”

Each of these four samayas is further analyzed under the following four topics: revealing its key point to be suchness itself; discerning the implications of its being ultimate and naturally occurring timeless awareness; embracing its larger scope as unborn and beyond the realm of the imagination; and coming to the decisive experience that it is beyond causality or deliberate effort. The sixteen factors thus enumerated constitute the overview of this treatise.

Furthermore, these topics correspond respectively to the following: the way of abiding as it is and always has been; immersion in genuine being as the experience of abiding within that context; conduct that involves no fixation; and dharmakaya that is spontaneously present. When one knows this, the ultimate meaning that has not been perceived before is pointed out as being the supreme transcendence of phenomena and the falling away of ordinary consciousness. *The Heaped Jewels* states:

Given the unique quality of timelessness beyond the three times,
its constant flow is without interruption or boundary
and so has no beginning, middle, or end.

With linear time resolved in timelessness,
there is only the label “supreme evenness,”
for what comes about cannot be ascertained.

Having no association with discursive thought as such,
the complete and ultimate meaning of natural great perfection
penetrates to the core of the ordinary mind.

The thought that this is nonmanifest or nonexistent as an object
is not cut through deliberately;
rather, it is cut through in its own ground.

The root of the nonrecognition of awareness, without having
to be examined,

is timelessly determined never to entail confusion.

But none of this is perceptible to anyone in any way.

Moreover, with all the coarse elements
naturally cleared away from the very beginning,
the ineffability of the realms of ordinary beings
is naturally ensured.

In the timeless ineffability of one’s body

lies the knowledge that it has never existed and never will.

All of this is timeless and does not manifest within any construct
of time,

be it unitary, twofold, sixfold, or threefold.

Manifestation, partial manifestation,
and nonmanifestation take place within their own contexts,
yet what is timelessly present

in transcending such contexts is not perceived by anyone.

Timelessly untraversable, the path is ever close at hand.

It is, in fact, timelessly present in oneself.

It has not been perceived before, for one's mind has been dull.

The enlightened intent of meditative stability, which does not

abide in any specific way,

is timelessly present without being cultivated in meditation;
no one has been aware of this before, either.

As for self-identity and the objects of its reifying perceptions,
from the very beginning, in the nature of phenomena,
all these are the natural manifestations of self-knowing

awareness,

but previously there has been no knowledge that they
manifest timelessly.

The five afflictive emotions, bound up with a sense of identity,
arise timelessly and naturally within awareness
and are indwelling, but go unrecognized.

The four elements—earth, water, fire, and air—

have always constituted one's physical body,

but no one sees this, for everyone's vision is truly dull.

The vital essence of the pith instructions that condense

the innermost secrets

proclaims itself naturally without interruption,

but no one has heard this—have they no ears to hear?

The fragrance of naturally abiding basic space and awareness
is never absent, but envelops one.

Is the nose blocked, that one cannot smell this?

The flavor of the pith instructions that blend three vital essences
is and always has been the quintessence of mind and body.

Has the tongue been cut out, that one cannot taste this?

Apparent phenomena are naturally pure, and color is their
adornment.

Never separate from one's body,

like the shadow that it casts,

they are present day and night.

Is the body lifeless, that one cannot feel this?

Pervasive suffering and the quality of happiness abide naturally in their inexpressibility, but no one knows this, for the ordinary mind is so dull. The habitual patterns of samsara are composite, yet they abide timelessly as dharmakaya, which is the seat of compassion, unperceived by anyone. With the arising of sense faculties, concepts of identity, and sense objects, the various recollections, thoughts, and mental stirrings arise timelessly and naturally as sambhogakaya, yet all this is not recalled, for everyone is so forgetful. Contrived actions, conduct, effort, and achievement, as well as all the cacophony of beings coming together—these are nirmanakaya, timelessly, but no one is conscious of this, for everyone is utterly dull. However thoughts and recollections stir, they are uninterrupted, like the flow of a river, constantly ensnaring the mind.

One cannot implement meditation that is effortless, resting naturally, for the mind is so distracted. As for the tangible universe, upon examination it is ineffable by nature. What is ever present as the view that cuts through the momentum of the wheel of life is not perceived. Are the avenues of the senses blocked?

To summarize, then, this view reveals the irrefutable key point that all phenomena of the world of appearances and possibilities, whether of samsara or nirvana, are none other than natural manifestations as the display, dynamic energy, and adornment of naturally occurring timeless awareness. The implications of this are discerned by virtue of the openness of unconstrained enlightened intent within the natural state of rest of this timeless awareness. The larger scope to be embraced is one of conduct that is naturally pristine and unembellished with respect to anything that manifests, since all of this is spontaneously present within naturally occurring timeless awareness. Within its spontaneous presence and oneness, there is the decisive experience of the fruition, since this oneness is nothing other than naturally occurring timeless awareness.

Although we speak of these topics individually, in actuality they are encompassed within the scope of naturally occurring timeless awareness. *The All-Creating Monarch* presents a definitive conclusion regarding that very point according to three levels of interpretation—metaphor, underlying meaning, and evidence:

If you wish to realize its ultimate meaning with certainty,
 the metaphor is one of comparing it to space,
 the underlying meaning is the unborn nature of phenomena,
 and the evidence is the unceasing nature of mind.
 Since the nature of phenomena is like space,
 it is illustrated by the metaphor that likens it to space.

The same source continues:

All phenomena are awakened mind and the metaphor
 is that their nature is like space—the universal metaphor—
 which is also the ultimate meaning of awakened mind.

This is the basic space, or source, of all phenomena. Just as the universe manifests within the realm of space, what manifests as samsara and nirvana is nothing other than what manifests in light of awareness. Although all phenomena, which are produced and ascribed by ordinary mind, manifest within awakened mind, awakened mind is not itself created by anything. The same source states:

Awakened mind, which creates everything, is unique in not
 being created.

All-creative—naturally creative through enlightenment itself—
 that which is unique in not being created need not be created.

Thus, it is the vajra premise of this work that all phenomena can be discussed within the scope of naturally occurring timeless awareness. I will now explain at length the supportive arguments, in five chapters concerning ineffability, openness, spontaneous presence, oneness, and the candidates.

1

The Theme of Ineffability

Of these five chapters, the first concerns ineffability. This is considered under four headings: revealing the key point, discerning the implications, embracing the larger scope, and coming to the decisive experience.

Revealing the Key Point

All phenomena are shown to have no substance or characteristics:

Of these, I will first demonstrate the theme of ineffability.
The ineffable nature of things is that they are empty by virtue
of their very essence.
In the vast expanse of awakened mind, equal to space,
however things appear, they are at the same time ineffable
by nature.

Both the essence of awareness and all phenomena that appear within its scope are such that timelessly they are empty and without identity, so all elaborations subside thoroughly in being unborn. *The All-Illuminating Sphere* states:

Awareness, tranquil and having no substance,
entails no elaboration, substance, or characteristics.

The metaphor for ineffability, as well as its meaning, is ascertained:

Within the womb of basic space as an infinite sky,
however the universe manifests through transitions and changes
in the four elements,
these forms of emptiness are ineffable by nature,
as are phenomena that are the manifest aspect of
awakened mind.

Although the creation and destruction of world systems occur within the realm of space, these manifestations have no essence within that space, and so are ineffable by nature. The four elements that account for these manifestations, in being produced and destroyed, by nature lack true existence and so do not exist on the level of even the most subtle subatomic particles. Just as animate and inanimate phenomena have never actually existed, so too awareness and all phenomena that appear within its scope are ineffable by nature. *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

And so, just as there is nothing in the entire universe, the world
of all appearances and possibilities,
that does not abide within the realm of space,
so too the enormous scope of the vast expanse of awakened mind
is such that buddhas, ordinary beings, and the entire universe are
present therein.

Still, in the nature of phenomena—the total innate purity
of everything—
there is no duality, for there is freedom from all value judgments.

Now, phenomena, which manifest in light of awareness, are shown to be ineffable by nature:

Just as illusory images, while manifesting in any way whatsoever,
are empty by nature and have no substance,
so all phenomena—the world of appearances and possibilities—
even as they manifest
do not waver from awakened mind and have no substance.

In this way, regardless of how things manifest—the entire realm of apparent phenomena as a container, and beings in possible states of conditioned existence as the contents—they, like an illusory universe, are ineffable by nature, neither wavering nor separating from the scope of awareness. *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

All phenomena of the universe—the world of appearances
and possibilities, whether of samsara or nirvana—
are inevitably such that they do not waver from awakened mind.

Phenomena appearing in this way are shown not to waver from the scope of spontaneously present awareness:

Just as dreams do not stray from sleep
and, even as they appear, are by nature ineffable,
the world of appearances and possibilities, whether of samsara
or nirvana,
likewise does not waver from the scope of awakened mind
and has no substance or characteristics.

Just as dream images—environments, people, and so forth—do not stray from the realm of sleep, so all naturally manifest phenomena of the six states of ordinary being are such that they do not waver from the basic space of awareness. As well, the three kayas—all phenomena of the pure state of perception—do not waver even slightly from the basic space of awareness, free of dualistic perception. *The Direct Encounter with the Three Kayas* states:

The six kinds of beings and the four modes of rebirth
originate from the basic space of phenomena and return
to that space.
Although objects and mind appear distinct from one another
within dualistic perception,
it is the basic space of phenomena that is perceived as object,
basic space that is perceived as subject.
There is no dualistic perception within the realm
of basic space itself.
The extent of what is known by buddhas of the three times
arises from the basic space of phenomena and is known therein.

Knowing is unceasing and the known is the basic space
of phenomena.

The direct encounter with the three kayas is the expanse within
which there is natural arising and natural freedom.

Although there is the outward appearance of objects, they have never
existed as mind or anything other than mind:

Although phenomena appear as they do to the mind,
they are not mind, nor anything other than mind.

Given their illusory nature as clearly apparent yet ineffable
manifestations,

moment by moment they are beyond description, imagination,
or expression.

For this reason, know that all phenomena that appear
to the mind

are ineffable even as they manifest.

The apparent phenomena that manifest as the five kinds of sense objects (visual forms and so forth), and the phenomena of the universe that seem to appear in their own right, manifest to the mind and so are nothing other than that. Even though they appear to be something other, like dreams and illusions they are ineffable by nature, and so have never been anything “other” and have never even been mind. In accordance with the eight traditional metaphors for illusoriness, an examination of phenomena as forms of emptiness, clearly apparent yet ineffable—whether considered to be composed of reducible or irreducible particles—determines their equalness in having no identity. One knows the basic space of unchanging emptiness through these natural manifestations of the nature of mind. *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

Seek the location of the heart essence through phenomena that
derive from it

and come to appreciate it through the skillful means of not
conceptualizing in any way whatsoever.

Since the heart essence occurs naturally, dharmakaya is not
elsewhere.

Examine even the smallest particle of matter and it is free
of all differentiation.

That which is ultimately meaningful, not abiding
in any specific way,
is sublime timeless awareness, which occurs naturally.
If one enters the totally pure path to the direct and completely
nonconceptual experience
of the spacious heart essence, one attains a majestic evenness.
Since this does not and will not change, there is no context
for attachment.

Similarly, there is no object to be perceived, no context
for ordinary mind.

“Well,” you might ask, “aren’t you asserting everything to be mind?” Let me clearly outline the distinction to be made. In general, if the world of appearances and possibilities, whether of samsara or nirvana, is explained to be awakened mind, what is meant is that phenomena are alike (in that they do not waver from a single awareness) and manifest naturally as the display, dynamic energy, and adornment of that awareness. In this sense they are considered to be mind, just as one calls the rays of the sun “the sun” when one says, “Sit in the mid-day sun.”

There are two ways to refute such an assertion. According to logical reasoning, this would require that mind exhibit color and other distinctive features, because apparent phenomena have color and such features. It would also require that mind be external or that apparent phenomena be internal, and so their actual relationship would be thrown into chaos. And it would require that when one died the universe would collapse at the same time. In these and other ways, the assertion is disproved by its logical absurdity.¹

This assertion can also be disproved by scriptural authority. *Samantabhadra: Mirror of Enlightened Mind* states:

To hold that apparent phenomena are mind is to stray from me.

And *Naturally Arising Awareness* states:

Why is this variety held to be mind?
With all that occurs, some hold this variety to be mind,

valid whether the fruition of buddhahood comes about or whether ordinary beings remain unawakened.

To give an example, black coal does not become white even if polished.

Similarly, in their confusion, ordinary beings do not awaken to buddhahood even though they meditate and practice.

And *The Tantra Summarizing the Ultimate Meaning* states:

Fools who do not perceive the ultimate meaning claim that apparent phenomena are one's own mind.
This is like taking brass to be gold.

In this regard, these days some who arrogantly assume that they understand the Great Perfection approach, or who follow ordinary spiritual approaches, hold apparent phenomena to "be" one's own mind. They speak without defining the issues involved and so commit an extremely serious error, for ordinary mind and awakened mind are not identical. "Ordinary mind" refers to the eight modes of consciousness and their associated mental events, which together constitute the adventitious distortions affecting beings in the three realms. "Awakened mind" refers to awareness—that is, naturally occurring timeless awareness that has no substance or characteristics, the basic space of all samsara and nirvana. Since the world of appearances and possibilities arises as the dynamic energy or the display of awakened mind, "awakened mind"—which is actually their cause—is simply the label applied to them as the result. While that which manifests as samsara and nirvana is understood to be the dynamic energy of awareness, one should further understand that awareness itself constitutes an unceasing ground for the arising of things, although it has never existed as anything, whether of samsara or nirvana.

Apparent objects are understood to be clearly apparent yet ineffable and have never been mind or anything other than mind, being empty yet clearly apparent, groundless, and timelessly pure. When freedom occurs, the dynamic energy and display, in being groundless, are naturally pure, which is like awakening from a dream. Thus, one should understand that self-knowing awareness, without ever having

wavered from its original state of natural rest—unchanging dharmakaya—is uncontaminated by any substance or characteristics.

These days, no one other than me makes such distinctions. Some hold apparent phenomena to be mind, others hold them to be something else, but they have no opinions other than these. Even people within my own school are not precise, because they accept that which arises as dynamic energy, display, and adornment to be the essence.

In this regard, “dynamic energy” is the creative potential of awareness and accounts for the fact that samsara and nirvana arise differently, just as the very same ray of sunlight causes a lotus blossom to open and a night lily to close. “Display” is used in the sense of the radiance of awareness displaying itself, like a lamp displaying itself as light or the sun displaying itself as sunbeams. “Adornment” refers to the fact that naturally manifest phenomena, appearing in full array, arise of themselves as adornment in light of awareness. This is similar to rainbows, the sun and moon, stars, and planets being adornments of the sky. Moreover, concerning these terms *The All-Illuminating Sphere* states:

The essence of dynamic energy is unceasing.

The same source continues:

Unceasing, nondual, and richly endowed—
I have shown these to be the essence of display.

It further states:

Therefore, beauty is referred to as “adornment.”

With these related topics, I have finished demonstrating my point.

Now, it is shown that awareness itself has never existed as anything:

And so, just as apparent objects are ineffable by nature,
the nature of awakened mind, which perceives them,
is in essence ineffability, like that of space.
Know this to be beyond description, imagination, or expression.

The essence of awareness—the ground for the arising of the world of appearances and possibilities, whether of samsara or nirvana—has never existed as anything and so is like space. *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

Awakened mind—its nature is that of space.

All phenomena are awakened mind and the metaphor
is that their nature is like space—the universal metaphor.

The very essence of ineffability is present in the following way:

In naturally occurring timeless awareness, the ultimate
heart essence,

there is no causality, so the abyss of samsara is crossed.

There is no better or worse, so samsara and nirvana
are an integrated mandala.

There is no error or obscuration, so the three planes of
conditioned existence are seen through incisively.

There is no causality in the essence of awareness as such, naturally lucid² in all its nakedness, and so the pitfall of samsara and the abyss of happiness and suffering are timelessly crossed. While the whole of samsara occurs due to the unceasing manner in which causes and effects manifest, awareness in its very essence never existed as any cause or effect. For this reason, it has no error or obscuration, no quality of better or worse. So whatever manifests—samsara or nirvana—constitutes an integrated mandala in light of awareness. In actuality this has never existed, and so one's mind is at ease.

Within the scope of awareness, which has never existed as anything, it makes no difference what arises and abides therein, for everything is timelessly free in never having known existence. This being so, it is simply a matter of remaining in the realization of that in all its immediacy. Other than this (although one might speciously posit something to be “buddhahood”), in actuality nothing whatsoever has improved, because there has been no wavering from what is, like space, fundamentally unconditioned. *Deep Immersion in Awareness*, composed by the master Garab Dorjé, states:

Given evenness, in which objects are not conceptualized
and mind is not reified,
body and mind dwell as a matter of course in the expanse
of that evenness.

Regardless of how awareness appears to arise,
as a matter of course there is no wavering from this expanse³
of evenness.

Objects with characteristics have no existence as objects,
for there is abiding in a state of deep immersion.

Timelessly there is no duality, and so no distinctions
can be made.

No distinctions can be made between ordinary beings
and buddhas, between samsara and nirvana.

What has substance and what lacks substance are equal
in basic space.

Buddhas and ordinary beings are equal in basic space.

Relative and ultimate reality are equal in basic space.

Flaws and qualities are equal in basic space.

Up, down, all directions are equal in basic space.

Therefore, when arising, things arise equally, without being better
or worse.

When abiding they abide equally, without being better or worse.

When freed they are freed equally, without being better or worse.

Although they arise unequally, they arise from the basic space
of their equalness.

Although they abide unequally, they abide in the basic space
of their equalness.

Although they are freed unequally, they are freed within the basic
space of their equalness.

In basic space there has never been a question of there being
arising or not.

In basic space there has never been a question of there being
abiding or not.

In basic space there has never been a question of there being
freedom or not.

When things arise, they arise naturally and so hold their
own place.

When they abide, they abide naturally and so hold their
own place.

When they are freed, they are freed naturally and so hold their own place.

They arise, abide, and are freed, and when they arise, their arising and their freedom are simultaneous and uninterrupted.

Since there is no interruption, causality does not intervene.

Since there is no causality, the abyss of samsara is crossed.

This abyss has no basis, so how could there be any chance of falling?

The expanse of Samantabhadra is timelessly unchanging.

The realm of Vajrasattva is without transition or change.

It all comes down to using the term “buddhahood” to refer to nothing more than one’s own true face beholding itself.

Concerning the absence of error and obscuration, *The All-Illuminating Sphere* states:

Within the unique sphere of great perfection

there is no question of whether or not there are pitfalls.

Such pitfalls are, by nature, totally pure.

In the unique freedom from everything, nothing whatsoever is abandoned.

Since there has never been duality in the view, meditation, conduct, and fruition of ati,

there is no error or obscuration due to dualistic appearances.

View, meditation, conduct, and fruition—because these four have always been naturally occurring timeless awareness, there is no error or obscuration due to the coming together of causes and conditions.

The view, meditation, conduct, and fruition of great perfection are spontaneously present.

Thus, the obscurations and pitfalls of striving with hope and fear in meditation and spiritual practice are completely and innately pure.

Since there is nothing prior to me,

I am unobscured, lucid timeless awareness.

Although the eight spiritual approaches manifest as inferior, they are nonetheless the deeds and conduct of my responsiveness. Inalienable sublime knowing dwells within me.

Given timeless awareness, unadulterated and perfect, any pitfalls due to lapses are totally and innately pure. In the natural lucidity of inalienable sublime knowing, it is clear that there is none of the fragmentation that results from error or obscuration.

Since this is beyond the teachings of lower spiritual approaches, their defining characteristics are shown to be nonexistent:

Enlightenment—the nature of mind, like space—is not defined by any extreme or bias, for it is nondual by nature. So there is no view to be cultivated, no samaya to be upheld, no effort to be made in enlightened activity, nothing to obscure timeless awareness, no levels on which to train, no paths to be traversed, no subtle factors, no duality, no dependent relationship. Since value judgments are transcended, there is nothing spiritual or nonspiritual. This expanse, like the Isle of Gold in that it entails no differentiation or exclusion, is the naturally occurring nature of mind, like space, ineffable by nature and beyond all characterization and expression.

The very essence of awareness itself has never existed as anything, so nothing exists within it—no specific factors of view, meditation, conduct, or fruition; no levels of realization on which to train or paths to be traversed; no development or completion stage constructs; no structured samaya; no enlightened activity to be accomplished; no timeless awareness that brings about improvement; or anything else. Without value judgments, there is no differentiation or exclusion concerning what is spiritual and what is not, and one reaches the decision that whatever appears or arises is naturally manifest, timelessly free, and totally and innately pure. When one journeys to the precious Isle of Gold, there is no ordinary earth or stone to be found even if one searches for it. Similarly, there is nothing to be found in awareness that is not free, or that is a factor to be abandoned, or that constitutes a view, meditation, conduct, or fruition to be deliberately contrived.

This is because awareness is uninterrupted, with everything appearing freely and vividly—the natural manifestation of unobstructed awareness in which phenomena are resolved.

Therefore, as *The All-Creating Monarch* states, there is nothing to be sought or achieved through the ten attributes:

The heart essence of everything—this awakened mind,
itself timelessly and spontaneously present by nature—
need not be sought or achieved through the ten attributes.

My nature is like space, the universal metaphor.

In pure space all is such that it entails no effort;

in pure space all is such that there is no effort to be made.

Space, within which all is created, is beyond all effort

and achievement;

so too is the all-creating heart essence, awakened mind.

Because I transcend the entire range of finite experience,

in me there is nothing to view, nor ever anything to cultivate
in meditation.

Likewise, the nature of these ten attributes is such that
for me, the transcendent one, nothing need be done.

Those who follow spiritual approaches based on either
causes or results

wish to behold me and my nature.

As though stepping out into space and falling to earth,
they will fail in their attempts to progress by using these
ten attributes.

My nature shows itself to be authentic.

Because I transcend the entire range of finite experience,
there is no view to be cultivated in meditation.

Similarly, given that the ten attributes do not exist ultimately,
if you do not insist upon thinking that they do exist ultimately,
there is no object perceived by your looking at me,
so do not attempt to look: rest in suchness itself.

Since there is no cause that separates one from the unborn state
free of elaboration,

there is no need to observe vows and spiritual disciplines.

Because the heart essence is timelessly and spontaneously present,
there is no need for effort or achievement.

Because naturally occurring timeless awareness is unobscured,
this awareness cannot be made more lucid.

Because everything abides on my level,
 there are no levels of realization to train on and traverse.
 Because I abide all-pervasively, there is no path that leads to me.
 Because I am timelessly free of dualistic perception,
 there is nothing that could even be labeled "subtle."
 Because my form is all-pervasive, "two" have never existed.
 Since I have always been naturally occurring timeless awareness,
 there is no definitive conclusion about me for anyone to reach.
 Since I am the very heart of everyone's enlightenment,
 there is no secret source of pith instructions elsewhere.

And *The Direct Encounter with the Three Kayas* states:

The vast expanse, in which nothing need be done, is not limited
 by origination or cessation.
 Like the Isle of Gold, this expanse entails no differentiation
 or exclusion.
 Awakened mind is the source that dispels the gloom
 of limitations.
 Within awakened mind the four limitations are not renounced,
 yet it is unaffected by these limitations, and so pitfalls are
 inevitably traversed.

Now, awareness is shown to transcend any cause or effect, whether positive or negative:

Within the ultimate heart essence—awareness as such⁴—
 there is nothing to improve upon, so positive actions bring
 no benefit.
 There is nothing to deteriorate, so negative actions inflict
 no injury.
 There is no karmic causality, so there is no happiness or suffering
 as its inevitable consequence.
 There is no better or worse, so there is no rejection of samsara
 or acceptance of nirvana.
 There is no way to think of or express this essence, so there is
 freedom from all such attempts.
 There is no before or after, so successive lifetimes are
 mere labels.
 How can anything be perpetuated?

How can anyone move through samsara at all?
 What is karma? What are its inevitable consequences?⁵
 Contemplate and examine the ultimate meaning,
 which is like space.

In this regard, *The Text of Precious Copper Letters* states:

Look carefully at what is truly meaningful—at awareness. Are there the ten kinds of virtuous actions to carry out? Is there any samaya to uphold? Is there any view, meditation, conduct, or fruition to implement? Are there any inevitable karmic consequences, any lower states of existence?

This and similar passages point out that in awareness as such—dharma-kaya in all its nakedness—regardless of what virtue has been created, nothing becomes any better and so no benefit is entailed. Regardless of what harm has been created, there is nothing to deteriorate and therefore no injury is inflicted. Since its very essence has never been anything, there is no karmic process with its inevitable consequences, whether pleasant or painful, better or worse. Since there are no previous or future lifetimes, or any karmic causality, samsara amounts to nothing but a mere label. For those who do not realize that the very essence of awareness abides thus, samsara manifests as pleasant or painful. For one immersed in genuine being, however, the state of total resolution is termed “timelessly pure emptiness in which phenomena are resolved.” Although samsara and nirvana—all that is positive or negative—appear like dream images within the scope of awareness, the very essence remains unaffected by them and there are no causes or effects, whether positive or negative. Since they do not exist, previous and future lifetimes are nonexistent. Since the process by which things originate absolutely falls away, the three planes of conditioned existence are emptied in supreme original purity—the “great dredging of the pit of samsara to its depths.”

By abiding thus in the very essence of awareness, those immersed in genuine being realize this awareness. When they rest in the very essence of what is truly meaningful, there is not the slightest benefit or injury, regardless of the positive or negative karma they may have created. This is because they have merged with the immediacy of what is. For this reason, those who are immersed in genuine being to the very

highest degree relate to apparent phenomena in an easygoing way, since virtue and harm do not exist for them. They never fall outside self-knowing awareness as such, because for them there is only the understanding that awareness manifests naturally.

The twelve kinds of vajra laughter, as discussed in *The Tantra of Heaped Jewels*, give one conviction in this approach:

O Essence of the Vajra of Speech of All Buddhas, behold the view, naturally occurring timeless awareness. How marvelous—it is beyond positive and negative, beyond view and meditation. The immutable ground of being is free of any benefit or harm, regardless of what is done physically or verbally. Ha! Ha!

O Vajra of Speech, behold the fundamentally unconditioned way in which things are present. How marvelous—these manifestations undergo no change or alteration. Regardless of how one thinks of them, as pleasant or painful, in actuality they are unchanging. Ha! Ha!

O Vajra of Speech, behold supreme emptiness, timeless awareness that is the source of everything. How marvelous—it arises as display regardless of the many kinds of purposeful conduct undertaken. Regardless of what has been done, freedom is unceasing within the unborn expanse. Ha! Ha!

Listen further, O Vajra of Speech! Behold the nature of phenomena, empty and all-pervasive timeless awareness. How marvelous—it is unborn and abides timelessly, coemergent with being itself. Even if a person were to seize a sharp weapon and slay all beings at once, that person's mindstream would still be free of benefit or harm. Ha! Ha!

O Vajra of Speech, behold your empty awareness, timeless awareness that allows for the manifestation of everything. How marvelous—all apparent phenomena, however they manifest, arise as your allies. Although they manifest as anything whatsoever, they do not waver from their own ground. Ha! Ha!

O Essence of the Vajra of Speech, behold empty awareness, the vision that allows for the freedom of everything. How marvelous—it constitutes its own greatest ally. Afflictive emotions are naturally freed in and of themselves. Ha! Ha!

O Vajra of Speech, behold empty awareness, the essence of universal purity. How marvelous—the fruition is discovered in it-

self, without exertion. With this single assurance, all samsara and nirvana is innately pure in nonduality. Ha! Ha!

O Vajra of Speech, behold the essence, supreme emptiness, the matrix that is the ground of all experience. How marvelous—the six kinds of beings manifest as the three kayas. Ordinary beings awaken to buddhahood at once without having meditated in the slightest. Ha! Ha!

O Vajra of Speech, behold the three kayas, supreme emptiness, the fruition that is timelessly perfect. How marvelous—united throughout the three times, they do not come together and then separate. Without one engaging in the six perfections, the accumulations are completed simultaneously. Ha! Ha!

O Vajra of Speech, behold awareness resting in the immediacy of the moment, the universal evenness of supreme emptiness. How marvelous—all deliberate actions arise as adornment.⁶ Within view there is freedom from all reaction. Ha! Ha!

O Vajra of Speech, behold the emptiness of what is empty—supreme and timeless emptiness. How ironic—all buddhas would find themselves on the edge of an abyss, and meditation involving deliberate actions would cause them to plummet. Ha! Ha!

O Vajra of Speech, behold the reification of emptiness as that which is not empty. How astonishing—some spiritual approaches misconstrue what is ineffable as having identity. The unborn is attained through that which seems to be born. Ha! Ha!

It is shown that there is always abiding without duality:

Even though you investigate intelligently, contemplating
and analyzing over and over,
there is no fragment of substance—not even an atom
can be found—and no division of time.

With no dualistic perception, in that very moment there is **abiding**
in the heart essence,
ultimately meaningful and fundamentally unconditioned.
Ineffable when examined—and by the same token ineffable when
not examined—

phenomena in their multiplicity are always ineffable,
since there is not the slightest frame of reference, even in terms
of conventional labels.⁷

Know that by nature they have no substance, like illusions.

What is ultimately significant about the ineffability of causes and effects, whether positive or negative, is that it does not vary, being constant throughout the three times (earlier, later, and at present). Even if you repeatedly seek awareness, whether outwardly, inwardly, or in between, you will not find it. You will not find it even if you analyze the smallest particle of the whole universe or of the beings it contains. You will not find it even if you examine each instant of either ordinary mind or awareness. Even though you divide time into past, future, and present, the earlier phase has ceased to be, the later phase has not yet come into being, and the present moment is forfeited in the interval between and cannot be found. Similarly, no karma or its inevitable consequences—no causes or effects, whether positive or negative—can be found.

While phenomena are ineffable when you investigate them in this way, by the same token they are ineffable if you do not examine or investigate them, because there are absolutely no parameters for investigation and neither specific nor universal defining characteristics. They do not exist even on the level of conventional labels. While things indeed appear as they do to immature people—those deluded about the meaning of thatness itself—even once they have appeared they still do not exist, for the essence of awareness is absolutely unchanging. (It is similar to a magical illusion within which people seem to engage in positive and negative acts, even though there are no inevitable consequences of those acts for them to experience.) This is so because if there truly were causes and effects, there would be no alternative to the logical conclusion that they are without transition or change.

Therefore, while causes and effects, whether positive or negative, do not have true existence for anyone, in particular they do not exist even as falsehoods for those immersed in genuine being, for whom there are no inevitable consequences to be experienced. One will gain conviction on these points through the “seven key statements on wonderment,” which are stated in *The Heaped Jewels*:

How marvelous! You, Essence of the Vajra of Speech, listen! Your own awareness is itself free of birth and death. With this key point I, Samantabhadra, have shown that there is not the slightest difference between an individual who has taken the lives of ten million beings and one who engages in the ten perfections.

O Vajra of Speech, there are no elaborations, only the nature of phenomena. With this key point I, Samantabhadra, have shown that, regarding their awakening to buddhahood, there is not the slightest difference between two people, one a spiritual person who constantly cultivates a familiarity with emptiness in meditation and the other a person who has never entertained the idea of emptiness for even an instant.

O Vajra of Speech, awareness itself is noncomposite. With this key point I, Samantabhadra, have shown that, regarding the opportunity to perfect the accumulations, there is not the slightest difference between two people, one with faith who has performed immeasurable acts of virtue that is composite and another who is continually engaged in taking life.

O Vajra of Speech, awareness—timeless awareness—does not come or go. With this key point I, Samantabhadra, have shown that, regarding their perception of ultimate reality, there is not the slightest difference between two people, one a spiritual person who exhibits even various physical and verbal signs of having realized the nature of phenomena and the other a person who has not trained his or her mind even for an instant in hearing and contemplating spiritual teachings.

O Vajra of Speech, the nature of phenomena has no origin or cessation. With this key point I, Samantabhadra, have shown that, regarding their access to avenues of realization, there is not the slightest difference between two people, one undergoing the agonies of heat or cold in a hell realm and another enjoying the bliss of buddhas.

O Vajra of Speech, awareness is unchanging. With this key point I, Samantabhadra, have shown that, regarding realization of the way of abiding, there is not the slightest difference between two people, one a spiritual person who has cut through conceptual elaborations and another who believes that things have permanent identity.

O Vajra of Speech, dharmakaya is present within you. With this key point I, Samantabhadra, have shown that, regarding their attainment of the goal, there is not the slightest difference between two people, one who outwardly makes all kinds of offerings, praises, and prayers of supplication and another who simply sits without engaging in any action.

Vajra of Speech, it is for these reasons that a person who applies these statements about the supreme and naturally occurring state will discover the indwelling confidence to apply them effortlessly and thereby, in the inseparability of apparent phenomena and the three kayas, awaken to buddhahood.

Freedom is shown to come about through realization of the ultimate meaning of ineffability:

Within the context of emptiness that is inherent in dreams
and magical illusions,
those who are unwise and immature are bound by fixation,
but those who are conscious of the nature of these cannot
be bound.

Likewise, people who lack wisdom concerning ineffability
are bound by fixation on identity and so are caught up
in samsara,
while wise people who are immersed in genuine being—
aware of thatness and decisive in the very moment
about ineffability—
are free within the expanse, the nature of phenomena in which
there is no causality.

When the play of magic causes phantoms to emanate, the young, whose judgment is undeveloped, become attached to them. Their minds are bound by thinking of them as truly existent, while their elders understand what is really the case and are not ensnared. Similarly, though phenomena appear as they do, they cannot stand up to examination, for they are clearly apparent but illusory forms of emptiness that manifest naturally. Yet people who fixate on identity are continually ensnared in samsara by thinking of them as truly existent. Those immersed in genuine being, however, who are conscious of thatness itself, are beyond either bondage or release, and so are free in the expanse that is without characteristics. It is as *The Discourse of the Rare and Sublime Meteor* states:

All phenomena are similar to the Sugata.
Those whose minds are undeveloped, who invest things
with characteristics,

are caught up in the phenomena of their world, which are ineffable.

If they looked, they would gain understanding through this total refinement.

For those immersed in genuine being, who realize that all phenomena manifest yet lack true existence, it is clearly evident that there is nothing that is not free within the expanse of awakened mind. This shows that what does not hold for those involved with cause and effect, with effort and achievement, is entirely valid for those immersed in genuine being. *The Natural Freedom That Underlies Characteristics*, composed by the master Garab Dorjé, states:

The fact that the nature of phenomena is freedom in nonduality is perfectly plausible, but it is not conceivable in lower approaches.

The ease with which a wild goat kid⁸ climbs a rock face is possible for it, but is not feasible for other creatures.

Freedom within the expanse of awareness, in which nothing need be done,
is impossible with inferior spiritual approaches involving effort and achievement,
but it is easy for one immersed in genuine being on the path, equal to space, on which nothing need be done.

Timelessly awakened, awareness is nonreferential.
It cannot possibly wander in samsara, yet is the innate condition of all possible conditioned states.

The inferior mind, which believes the perceiver to be real, is freed in space—freed within the expanse that has no basis.

The unique sphere without edges or corners cannot possibly manifest dualistically, yet is the innate condition of all possible conditioned states.

The confused mind, which reifies phenomena as being identical or different, is freed in oneness—freed within the expanse of the nature of phenomena.

Naturally occurring timeless awareness, entailing no causes or conditions,

cannot possibly arise as the five poisons, yet is the innate condition of all possible conditioned states.

Hindrances to enlightenment, which keep one on the course of samsara,

are freed in a way that occurs naturally—freed within the expanse of timeless awareness.

Spontaneous presence, involving no extremes and free of limitations,

cannot possibly be defined by extremes or restrictions, yet is the innate condition of all possible conditioned states.

The negative influences that beset one, fixations on limitations that constitute extreme views,

are freed in the absence of extremes—freed within the expanse of spontaneous presence.

Unceasing emptiness, which has no substance or characteristics, cannot possibly arise as anything manifest, yet is the innate condition of all possible conditioned states.

There is freedom in apparent phenomena—freedom in the indeterminate expanse.

There is no differentiation or exclusion, only freedom within the expanse of spontaneous presence.

There is no process of uniting and then separating, only freedom in the expanse of the sphere of being.

Anything can and does arise—free within the indeterminate expanse.

Visual forms manifest—apparent phenomena that are naturally free.

Sounds are audible—heard, yet free in their own ground.

Whatever forms are seen or sounds are heard, regardless of what arises to the five senses,

there is no object, no “other,” for this is your true face beholding itself.

There is no duality: objects and mind are equally free.

Since anything can occur within a single state of equalness, there is “basic space.”

Since all positive qualities come about, there is the “ground of being.”

Since everything is free, involving no deliberate action, there is the “expanse of being.”

Ineffability is shown to be the heart essence of what is ultimately meaningful:

In the awakened nature of mind, which can be neither affirmed nor denied,

timeless awareness without dualistic perception abides as a matter of course.

In naked awareness, involving no causality, abides the unique sphere that is neither positive nor negative.

In unobstructed awareness, without limit or center, the wholly positive enlightened intent of dharmakaya abides as a matter of course.⁹

In enlightenment—self-knowing awareness, the heart essence of ineffability—

the totally pure and nonreferential intent of victorious ones is clearly evident.

The very essence of awareness, which is empty yet lucid and can be neither affirmed nor denied, is beyond the dualism of outer object and inner subject. It is itself free of cause and effect, whether positive or negative; there are no karmic consequences or habitual patterns. Therefore, this is unique, unobstructed, and wholly positive enlightened intent. *The Great Garuda Soaring in Space* states:

There is nothing to look for in mind; no one can see its underlying cause.

Therefore, it is free of negativity; what purpose could virtue serve here?

My own mode has its origins in the very beginning.

The ultimate meaning of enlightened intent is shown to lie in the realization of ineffability:

As the natural manifestations of awareness, ineffable phenomena arise as its unceasing display for those immersed in the genuine nature of illusoriness.

They decide that these are ineffable even as they arise
and do not react in the slightest with acceptance or rejection.
They abide in supreme imperturbable rest, which is carefree¹⁰
with a deep inner spaciousness.

For those immersed in genuine being, who understand all phenomena to be naturally manifest illusions, whatever appears arises as an ineffable display; so they apply the timeless seal of what is truly meaningful—a state of imperturbable rest. The detachment of one thus immersed makes for a more carefree frame of mind than that of ordinary happy-go-lucky people who are ensnared by their own cleverness, taking everything to be existent or nonexistent. *The Great Garuda* states:

One will not transcend the three realms with a mind ensnared
by cleverness.

Whoever relaxes into the uncontrived perceptions of an innocent
mind does not dwell in either samsara or nirvana.

The failure to realize ineffability is shown to be a flaw found in lower approaches:

The immature, fooled¹¹ by what is ineffable, are like deer
pursuing a mirage of water for which they thirst.
Since they invest meaning in conventional labels—
the language of confusion—
they are hampered in their respective philosophies,
misconstruing phenomena as having identity.¹²
Since the eight developmental approaches do not avoid
the pitfall of ordinary mind,
the genuine and ultimate heart essence is not seen.

Deer are tormented by mistaking a mirage for water. Similarly, immature people are plagued by phenomena they perceive as objects, and those who follow the eight lower spiritual approaches are plagued by investing the teachings of their respective approaches with identity. Thus, they are all alike in not reaching the essence of ultimate reality. In this regard, “personal identity” constitutes the ordinary mind’s thought process, which is one of arbitrary fixation on dualistic per-

ception and its attendant attachment and aversion. The “identity of phenomena” refers to ideas projected by ordinary consciousness onto what do not exist as objects—that is, all distortions of fixating on various kinds of view, meditation, conduct, and fruition as ends in themselves. In these respects, those who are not religious, who hold extreme religious views, or who follow the eight lower approaches are alike in failing to realize the way of abiding. *The Great Garuda* states:

For anyone who posits a nonexistent ground, a goal-oriented path, and an end result,
liberation remains obscure precisely because of these suppositions.

Emptiness as dull or illuminating, as existent or nonexistent, as something to be affirmed or denied, as cause or effect—there are no such limitations as these four pairs of eight factors. This is analogous to the realm of space.

Any positing of limiting alternatives to strive for is similar to a blind bird’s searching for the end of the sky—nothing will be found.

No one could possibly distort the ultimate meaning—that nothing can be found.

It is impossible for this unelaborate¹³ object of knowledge to have a final limit.

Ineffability is the nature of what is ultimately meaningful:

Atiyoga—basic space transcending phenomena, completely ineffable—is of the nature of space.

Moment by moment, there is no wavering from dharmakaya, the natural place of rest.

Throughout the vastness of original basic space,¹⁴ there is spontaneous presence in supremely blissful and natural rest.

Great perfection, naturally occurring timeless awareness, has never existed as anything, but abides as supreme spontaneous presence, empty yet lucid. Since it abides as supreme original purity, primordial basic space, it is called “the enlightened intent that is dhar-

makaya in its own natural place of rest." *The Tantra of Heaped Jewels* states:

Given ineffable emptiness, the source of phenomena,
there is abiding in timelessness within the natural basic space
of the supreme secret.

The supreme display arose at the outset,
its mode one of abiding without being objectified.

In this regard, no one abides, nor is anything created anywhere.
There is no gathering of abundance in this.

There is freedom from staying still or not, moving or not.

Similarly, the state of supreme and timeless emptiness
is one of ineffability, while its mode is basic space.

There is no outside or inside in this.

There is nowhere to look, upward or downward.

There is no direction in which anyone can objectify this
in the slightest.

Whoever is aware of the ultimate meaning of nonacceptance
has awakened to buddhahood prior to me, Samantabhadra.

The original awakened state in all its timeless immediacy—
supreme timeless awareness that does not abide in any
specific way—

is such that from the very beginning of the ground of being,
its mode is one of timeless abiding without deliberate settling.

People who reify this as a specific state will come to reify
enlightenment—

the heart essence of this secret of all buddhas.¹⁵

It is certain that original purity, the natural state of rest, is enlightenment—the heart essence, dharmakaya.

It is shown that one does not awaken to buddhahood by trying to do so:

If you do not realize secret awareness—that which is ultimately
meaningful in enlightened intent—
you will never be freed by that which entails deliberate effort.
Don't you know¹⁶ that anything composite is impermanent
and subject to disintegration?

How can the tight and intricate knot of ordinary body, speech,
and mind¹⁷
touch upon the ultimate meaning of the indestructible
heart essence?

If you do not understand the ultimate meaning of dharmakaya—self-knowing awareness—you will not be freed in this lifetime by spiritual teachings that require concerted physical, verbal, and mental effort. For spiritual conduct itself then becomes an intricate knot that binds you, hampering and obscuring awareness. While you will attain some slight happiness as a result of such practice, it is composite and so will disintegrate as does a vase [or any composite phenomenon]. Therefore, you will always fail to grasp the ultimate meaning of dharmakaya, which is not subject to disintegration; what is produced stands in contrast to what is not produced, because what is not produced is not subject to disintegration. In that the attainment of indestructible dharmakaya is experienced by abiding in naturalness without fabrication, all phenomena that are deliberately produced are knots that bind you. They will not bring you a single hairsbreadth closer to buddhahood, and so can be termed “shackles of the futile cycle of existence.” *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

Because nothing need be done concerning phenomena, . . .

The same source continues:

All thoughts concerning the unerring nature amount to nothing.
The tight and intricate knot of vows that restrict body
and speech
makes it extremely difficult to encounter the ultimate meaning
of the nature of phenomena.

The same source deals more extensively with the reasons for this:

Listen, O great and courageous one!
Be certain to uphold this transmission, which is from me,
the all-creating one.
It is unlike the mahayana approach based on either causes
or results.
All phenomena, regardless of how they manifest,

and natural mind are timelessly of the same nature,
so do not think of this in terms of traditions based on either
causes or results.

When one examines the suchness of natural mind,
what manifests is the essence, one's own enlightenment.
Failing to realize this, individuals ascribe names to things,
labeling the tangible "relative" and the intangible "ultimate."
Ultimate and relative are nondual—a single truth—
but I would err in supposing this to be real.
The desire for happiness is the sickness of attachment;
the absence of desire perpetuates happiness.
Buddhahood does not happen by being made to happen;
it is effortlessly and naturally indwelling, and so is
spontaneously present.

Rest nonconceptually in this effortless and naturally abiding
state.

I advise you not to stray from ineffability, the natural place of rest:

This being so, if you desire what is sublimely meaningful—
the way of abiding—
put aside all factors that, like so many childish games,
fetter and exhaust you physically, verbally, and mentally.
The nature of ineffability, the expanse free of elaboration,
is the nature of phenomena—natural great perfection.
In expansiveness beyond imagination, in which nothing need
be done,
behold the ultimate meaning of supreme, uncontrived evenness.
Since this is beyond causality and deliberate effort, be decisive.

Cast aside all contrived activities of body, speech, and mind. These activities are like those of children who gather at a playground and become consumed by their games, which regardless of how they are played are inconclusive, relentless, exhausting, and of little purpose. Like an old person basking in the sunshine, expand into a supremely blissful state of natural rest, which entails no causality, no acceptance or rejection. *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

Although arbitrary designations signify buddhahood,
I do not reveal buddhahood to exist in any real sense.

Whoever perceives buddhahood to be something existent will not find it to be other than basic space, the nature of phenomena.

Do not look for buddhahood; rather, realize that nothing need be done about natural mind.

If examined, it is found to be timelessly lucid yet ineffable. It does not manifest as substance, yet is by its very nature all-pervasive.

Such is the manifestation of the essence of what is.

In mahayana approaches based on either causes or results, in which “evenness” is something other than this, by various means—renouncing, progressing, training, and consecrating—

one strays from natural mind, the nature of phenomena, in which nothing need be done.

To ignore what is inherent and seek afar for something else, eagerly trying to arouse the bliss that requires no effort—there is no greater debility than this.

Undistracted meditative absorption is the stake that tethers one to reification.

With respect to what is and always has been, there is no distraction, nothing to be lost.

Undistracted meditative absorption is the harbinger of hope.

Such are the mahayana approaches based on either causes or results, which reveal that which is provisional.¹⁸

With respect to what is and always has been, there is no distraction, no loss.

This vanquishes the antidotes that entail all manner of effort and achievement.

If I, the all-creating one, were to disclose my transmission to teachers who expound on causality and to their retinues, they would misinterpret it and protest, “But results must come from causes!”

A yogin involved in meditative absorption who desires buddhahood

abandons uncontrived immersion in genuine being by desiring that absorption.

The uncontrived genuine state is the nature of everything.

There is no buddhahood apart from this nature.

To use the term “buddhahood” is simply to use an arbitrary designation.

The nature of phenomena requires nothing other than itself—natural mind.

Natural mind, uncontrived, is defined as dharmakaya.

In being uncontrived, it is timelessly beyond origination, so, in the ultimate sense of nonorigination, there is nothing to strive for or achieve.

That which requires no action will not be accomplished by effort or achievement.

Now, the section on revealing the key point of ineffability is concluded:

Self-knowing awareness,¹⁹ involving no perception of outer object and inner subject, has no time or place and is beyond phenomena that originate or cease.

It is pure like space, and so entails no provisional spiritual approach.²⁰

Since all thoughts²¹ of this as ultimately existent are mistaken, avoid any pitfall or obscuration that comes from misconstruing phenomena as having identity.

In the indivisible and wholly positive realm, be decisive in supreme and infinite emptiness.

Stand firm in the nature of phenomena, which is without transition or change.

In the primordial realm of basic space that does not abide in any specific way,

the superficial layers of view are cut through incisively, and the key point in its entirety is revealed to be ineffability.

Regarding all phenomena perceived as outer objects or inner subjects—the world of appearances and possibilities, whether of samsara or nirvana—however they manifest, there is decisiveness in awareness, which is noncomposite like space. There is decisiveness that they are in themselves ineffable, being the natural manifestations of innately pure forms of emptiness. All that manifests is empty yet apparent, and this manifestation is the simultaneity of awareness and emptiness. In actuality, the key point being revealed is that naturally occurring timeless awareness—empty yet lucid and naturally unsullied—is the supreme state without basis and free of origin, with all

that manifests being clearly apparent yet ineffable. *The Six Expanses* states:

Emptiness—the absence of the elaborations that apply
to sense objects.

Lucidity—beyond the limitations of existence and nonexistence.

Mindfulness—endowed with the power of total recall.

The manifestation of apparent phenomena—the path of direct
experience.

All this is beyond the numerous attempts to characterize it.

Not created through mantra, it is timeless perfection itself,
totally free of causes and conditions,

beyond²² all distortions of view or meditation,
without limits, without any reference to a center,
without specific manifestation, and without sense objects.

There is no deity, nor any mantra.

There are no phenomena, for all labeling²³ is transcended.

There is no enemy, nor any friend.

There is no body, nor anything that manifests
to the sense faculties.

Phenomena do not manifest through thought.

Nothing exists, for there is nothing to reify as anything.

I do not exist, nor does my retinue.

There is no basic space, nor any embodiment of awareness.

There is no virtue, nor inevitable consequences
of harmful actions.

There is no life force, so no idea of it being cut off.

There are no accumulations, nor objects to be amassed
anywhere.

There are no buddhas, nor ordinary beings.

There is no location, nor even emptiness.

There are no skillful teachings, nor any retinue to listen.

There are no objects.

Even the three times do not exist,
nor does a continuum of the three times.

Therefore, in that nothing whatsoever exists,

I manifest as undivided and indivisible.

My realm is beyond specific levels of realization.

Since there is no differentiation among my deeds and modes
of conduct,

in the equalness of the three times
my realm is ineffable, free of the idea of any basis.

With this, I have finished my presentation revealing the key point to be the ineffability of all phenomena.

Discerning the Implications

Now the implications of ineffability can be discerned. Within the context of ineffability lies the integrated mandala of awareness:

Thus, with the key point of ineffability having been revealed,
one implication is that awareness—a state of imperturbable rest
not cultivated in meditation—
can be discerned in the absence of acceptance or rejection
of whatever arises.

The vast expanse is the integrated mandala of mind.

In the immediacy of understanding any phenomena that manifest to be ineffable, rest imperturbably with whatever arises, without contrivance or distortion. To relax without acceptance or rejection is to discern the implications of unobstructed awareness as a unique state of perfection, and so, given the ineffability of apparent phenomena and awareness, there is integration in timeless emptiness. *The Great Garuda* states:

The ground of being is total freedom, timeless purity beyond characteristics.

Its effortless freedom, in which nothing need be done, removes the stumbling block of ordinary mind.

The implications of the threefold encounter—the display that manifests as sense objects—

can be discerned within the “interval” between objects and mind,
with nothing that arises being abandoned.

Meditative stability is shown to be spontaneously present by nature:

Vajra basic space—the supremely blissful state of natural rest—is sublime meditative stability, spontaneously present without having to be cultivated.

Always present, like the course of a great river,
it is self-evident if there is uncontrived equipoise.

Meditative stability as naturally abiding awareness, ever-present and like the flow of a river, becomes evident when one who is immersed in genuine being abides in the supreme and uncontrived state of genuine rest. *The All-Illuminating Sphere* states:

The supreme bliss that I have revealed, naturally occurring
and nondual,
is free of limitations—of whether or not there is something
on which to meditate.

In realizing the ultimate meaning of self-knowing awareness,
imbued with the power of sublime knowing,
there is complete purity, beyond any idea of whether or not
this is meditation.

Nondual supreme bliss abides within one's own natural state.
Resting without effort ensures that one does not unite with
and then separate from it.

In being uninterrupted, it is similar to the river Ganges.
I reveal this to benefit those of the very highest acumen.

With the discovery of natural meditative stability, the absence of error or obscuration is one of the implications that can be discerned:

The nature of phenomena, at rest just as it is, is similar to space.
Since there is no transition or change, there is no question
of whether or not there is distraction.

The immensity of sublime basic space, which does not form
and then disintegrate,
is not within the range of finite experience that can be
characterized by words.

Those immersed in genuine being—for whom naturally arising
awareness wells forth as the expanse of sublime knowing,
whose minds are not pedantic even though they have heard many
teachings,
and who experience what is indescribable and beyond
imagination—
decide that this is not a matter of anything being characterized
or not.

Since neither meditation nor anything on which to meditate can
be found,
there is no need to slay the foes of lethargy and agitation.

One immersed in genuine being, who perceives that awareness does not waver from its natural state of rest and who abides therein, thus discovers natural meditative stability. At that point the mind is not held within a specific frame of reference. Anything that arises does so without straying from meditative stability as the natural state of rest. Then, with that arising comes lucid consciousness; with mind abiding, meditative absorption is discovered. Thus, calm abiding and profound insight are united and there is natural purity, without errors or obscurations in meditative stability—lethargy, agitation, and so forth—having to be abandoned. This discovery of natural meditative stability is not a matter of knowledge that relies on words or conventional labels, on hearing or explaining. Those who realize and remain united with this may be those who have undergone thorough training in previous lifetimes and for whom in this life the expanse of sublime knowing wells forth to encompass the definitive meaning of the teachings. They may be those who, through the blessings of a guru, have been directly introduced to unobstructed awareness. They may be those who have thoroughly completed the process of hearing teachings on the ultimate heart essence. They may be those whose minds are inherently at ease and rest naturally. However, this is not the province of anyone else. *Deep Immersion in Awareness* states:

Resting just as it does in its own place, the nature of phenomena
is similar to space.

Since awareness undergoes no transition or change, there is no
question of whether or not there is distraction.

The immensity of sublime basic space, which does not form
and then disintegrate,
is not within the range of finite experience that can be
characterized with words.

Those immersed in genuine being—for whom naturally arising
awareness wells forth as the expanse of sublime knowing,
whose minds are not pedantic even though they have heard many
teachings,

and who have gained realization within the indescribable expanse—
 decide that this is not a matter of anything being characterized or not.
 Since neither meditation nor anything on which to meditate can be found,
 there is no need to slay the foes of lethargy, agitation, and discursive thought.

You might think that I am guilty of plagiarism, since this scriptural citation is so similar to my source verse, but this is not so. There are similar cases, such as the opening eulogy in *The Source Verses on the Middle Way*, which is also found in *The Augmentation of the Rare and Precious*. Several lines from *The Treasury of Higher Teachings*—for example, “ . . . seeming to have the flesh and blood body of the previous lifetime . . . ”—are to be found in *The Tantra of the All-Illuminating Sphere*. As well, several lines from Haribhadra’s *Minor Commentary*—such as, “Ah! Within the context of various mainstream traditions . . . ”—also appear in *The Elucidation of the Twenty Thousand Stanzas*. Using the stylistic device called “the harmonious integration of words and meaning,” I have thus adorned my text, since at times this inspires confidence in these profound topics.

It is shown that there is always natural abiding within the basic space of dharmakaya:

Since the heart essence²⁴ is ineffability (the timeless freedom of apparent phenomena and mind),
 the expanse of evenness (the nature of phenomena in which confusion settles out naturally)
 abides uninterruptedly in the realm of dharmakaya.
 There is no division between things arising and being free;
 they converge in a single blissful expanse.
 In arising, they arise naturally, holding to their own place.
 In abiding, they abide naturally, holding to their own place.
 In being freed, they are freed naturally, holding to their own place.
 Everything is naturally free, arising from the expanse of the nature of phenomena,

and thus does not stray elsewhere, being simply the display of dharmakaya.

Apparent phenomena, naturally manifest and experienced unconditionally, are the natural expressions of emptiness.²⁵

They abide in the ultimate heart essence, being neither positive nor negative.²⁶

All that manifests outwardly, although appearing to originate, remain, and cease within the expanse of awareness, does not stray from the context of emptiness. None of the reflections in a mirror can occur apart from its surface; if you examine them, no forms exist, only the surface of the mirror. Inwardly, conscious thoughts—which arise, remain, and are freed—do not stray from the scope of awareness; this is analogous to waves on the ocean that arise, remain, and cease, yet are not apart from the water. Nothing deviates from the spontaneously present expanse of the three kayas—dharmakaya as the natural place of rest, the unceasing avenue for the simultaneous arising of emptiness and lucidity. *The Direct Encounter with the Three Kayas* states:

Regardless of what is present, it is present within its own context.

However it goes, it goes within its own context.

In the basic space of enlightenment, innately there is no coming or going.

The embodiment of victorious ones neither comes nor goes.

Whatever is described is described within its own context.

Whatever is expressed is expressed within its own context.

In awakened mind, innately there is no description or expression.

The speech of victorious ones of the three times entails no description or expression.

However thinking occurs, it occurs within its own context.

However concepts²⁷ occur, they occur within their own context.

In awakened mind, there is never any thinking or concepts.

The mind of victorious ones of the three times is free of conceptualization.

Nirmanakaya is ineffable yet occurs in any way whatsoever.

Sambhogakaya is the richness of being enjoying itself.

Since there is no substantial basis to this, there is dharmakaya.
The fruition is the spontaneously present expanse of the three
kayas.

Another implication that can be discerned is that no trace is left in the encounter between mind and apparent phenomena:

**Whatever appears and whatever arises,
all things that proliferate and abide as dynamic expressions
of awareness—
such as the five emotional poisons—
no matter how they arise, even as they do so
there is recognition, perfection of their dynamic energy,
and their natural fading, leaving no trace.**

One implication is that equipoise constitutes a state of
imperturbable rest in the “interval” between objects
and mind.

Another implication is that, like a bird in flight, naturally
occurring timeless awareness leaves no trace.

Another implication is that everything is of one basic space,
like waves on water.

Phenomena are forever discerned within the context of the
supreme secret,
and so it is in the nature of things that freedom comes about
simply through an understanding of this key point.

Whatever inner thought processes arise regarding the myriad outer array of the five kinds of sense objects, at that point there is recognition of them arising in response to those objects. There is perfection of the energy inherent in that arising, and because one remains in this state, thoughts are freed as they fade naturally, leaving no trace. The level of dharmakaya will be attained as the natural place of rest by virtue of discerning the implications gleaned in any one of three ways: by resting imperturbably with whatever arises, by allowing it to occur in a spacious manner, or by relaxing with whatever arises in the immediacy of apparent phenomena manifesting.

These three are pivotal for such reasons as the following: If there is no such recognition, there is only a vague²⁸ acknowledgment. If one watches thoughts without their dynamic energy perfecting itself and

they fade, they are incapable of serving any greater purpose. Or if they do not fade naturally, one is not directly cutting through them.

Furthermore, with respect to naturally arising awareness, rest without distraction or effort, utterly relaxed in expansive openness, without mundane desire for bliss. *The Great Garuda* states:

Abandon desire for bliss, for this harms the mind;
rely on resting naturally, free of anything needing to be done
regarding samsara or nirvana.

As for the magical display of mind and apparent phenomena—
“This is self,” “This is other”—
the hindrances of mental stirring, perceiving, thinking, and
fixating are dispelled,
and so there is imperturbable rest that defies all attempts at
verbal expression.

The implications of whatever manifests as the miraculous display
of ordinary, conceptual mind
can be discerned within the “interval,” free of characterization,
between conceptual mind
and the objects that constitute its function.

Another implication that can be discerned is that the vast expanse of being is spacious awareness:

At any point, within the vast expanse of enlightened intent—
self-knowing awareness—
phenomena, without being better or worse, arise equally,
abide equally, and are freed equally.
Since there is no phenomenon that is unequal, nonabiding,
and not freed,
another implication that can be discerned is that enlightenment
is a spacious and timeless expanse.

Within the expanse of space, the universe manifests, abides, disintegrates, and becomes void, naturally in each case; still, it does not waver from the realm of space. Likewise, one discerns the implications here by becoming familiar with the fully encompassing realization that all phenomena arise within the expanse of awareness, abide within it, and are freed within it—all without wavering from this

unique state of empty awareness. *Deep Immersion in Awareness* states:

When arising, things arise equally, without being better or worse.

When abiding, they abide equally, without being better or worse.

When freed they are freed equally, without being better or worse.

Although they arise unequally, they arise from the basic space of their equalness.

Although they abide unequally, they abide in the basic space of their equalness.

Although they are freed unequally, they are freed within the basic space of their equalness.

You might wonder, since it was cited earlier, whether this quotation is repetitive, but under the circumstances it is not. Similar repetitions occur in the major commentary on the Kalachakra cycle entitled *White Lotus*, where there are three repetitions of a citation from *The Recitation of the Names of Manjushri*, and in *Clear Words*, where each quotation selected from *The Discourse on the Most Majestic State of Meditative Absorption* is cited several times.

Another implication that can be discerned is that causality is transcended:

From awareness,²⁹ uncreated and spontaneously present, arises enlightened intent, a natural state of rest that is effortless and spacious.

Awakened mind, beyond any causes and effects, whether positive or negative, is discerned within the realm of the unchanging nature of phenomena.

Meditation and other factors are distortions in that they entail causality; being impure, they involve nothing but effort and struggle. Having decided at this point that awareness entails no causality, one reaches equilibrium without having to do anything. *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

I, the all-creating one, am beyond causality.
 Beyond causality, I am beyond the entire range of finite
 experience.
 The nature of phenomena, which transcends everything,
 is awakened mind.
 Awakened mind is the heart essence of all phenomena.

Embracing the Larger Scope

Now, the larger scope is embraced. It is embraced as timeless emptiness, primordially pure:

Spacious enlightened intent, whose very nature is ineffable,
 embraces all phenomena without exception within its scope.
 Just as the universe is subsumed within the compass of space,
 so phenomena, naturally manifest, are subsumed within supreme
 and timeless emptiness.

The entire universe of appearances and possibilities is subsumed within the realm of space. Likewise, the five kinds of outer sense objects (which manifest naturally), as well as the inner mind (in which thoughts arise and are freed), are embraced within naturally occurring timeless awareness. This, in turn, is subsumed within the supreme and naturally pristine state of emptiness. The fact that nothing wavers from the context of timeless emptiness, free of origin, is what is meant by the phrase “encompassed within the wholly positive expanse.” *The Six Expanses* states:

Using words that reveal it without error, let me present the definitive conclusion concerning the ultimate meaning of natural great perfection. The form, speech, and mind of all buddhas are the manifestation of Samantabhadra, which is totally pure by nature. In the equalness of the three times, this is revealed to beings in the six states of ordinary existence. In that they are no different from my own manifestation, this is called “unification within the single expanse of many subjective perceptions.” All phenomena are free of negative concepts and dissolve into the expanse of me, Samantabhadra, who is free of elaboration. Since my manifestation arises naturally in the expanse of being, which can be likened to an

ocean, all mandalas are timelessly and naturally encompassed within this expanse. They come together in the single expanse of the great seal, which timelessly and naturally does not itself abide in any specific way.

Great and courageous one, my manifestation is the manifestation of what is itself nonmanifest. Since it is capable of pervading and imbuing what is visible and audible—all forms and sounds—it constitutes what is called the “expanse of the secret heart essence,” occurring naturally as the form aspect of Samantabhadra.

My manifestation is in every way ineffable, yet arises as anything whatsoever. This constitutes what is called the “expanse encompassing the pervasive and naturally pure heart essence,” occurring naturally as the speech aspect of Samantabhadra.

My manifestation arises naturally as the epitome of all that can be described or imagined in any way. This constitutes what is called the “expanse encompassing the heart essence of naturally empty awareness,” occurring naturally as the mind aspect of Samantabhadra.

O great and courageous one, all buddhas are beings who know the equalness of the three times and are said to “come together in the single expanse” of me, Samantabhadra.

If no attempt is made to contrive suchness,
then like the sky unobscured by clouds,
there is ever-lucid timeless radiance.
In the same way, just as in the clear sky
the orb of the sun shines naturally,
so the kaya of the immaculate essence—
the definitive unifying heart essence—is in fact my mandala.
In that all objective phenomena are encompassed therein,
all attempts to quantify the nature of phenomena come
to an end.

All of this is my, Samantabhadra’s, mind.
Since I—buddhahood that entails no concepts—
am free of the fixations of even subtle distortions,
unobscured radiance manifests overtly.
Since phenomena cannot be perceived through
phenomena,
I am not an object to be perceived.

O great and courageous one, all substance is the display of Samantabhadra. For this reason I, the buddha Samantabhadra, for the sake of beings everywhere, ensure manifold activity in nonduality, so that they attain the meditative stability called “the transmission in which all attempts at description fall away.” They are then in nondual union with nonmanifest space.

Great and courageous one, my, Samantabhadra’s, deeds are such that they “occur as the epitome of the three kayas.” This is to attain the view known as “timeless awareness, the great perfection”—the fruition of the completely pure cause, buddhahood.

At that point, since I occur naturally, without being caused, there manifest on a vast scale the timeless awareness of enlightened form, the display of enlightened speech, and the deeds of enlightened mind. The unchanging vision of timeless awareness manifests naturally. The limitations of conceptual elaboration vanish naturally through the process of phenomena resolving. This occurs naturally for those with spacious minds. At the same time, one attains mastery over the manifestations of the incorruptible heart essence and becomes “Samantabhadra, master of all mandalas.”

The larger scope that transcends cause and effect, effort and achievement, is revealed:

**Samsara is just a label: cause and effect, effort and achievement,
are transcended.**

**There are no positive or negative actions that benefit or harm—
the context of emptiness.**

Liberation is just a label: nirvana does not exist.

**There is nothing to be sought or achieved through
the ten attributes.**

The ultimate meaning of fundamentally unconditioned awareness is that it entails no causes or effects, whether positive or negative. Yet there are those who rely on scriptural sources dealing with provisional meanings, who hold and demonstrate causality to be existent, and who will never be liberated, because they remain obscured by the distortions of all-consuming delusion. One should realize this awareness

to be natural great perfection, beyond causes and effects, whether positive or negative. *The Great Garuda* states:

The nature of mind, primordially uncreated,
is revealed to be the ultimate heart essence of the ordinary
conscious mind.

Sublime knowing and the words it employs uphold the natural
truth of this.

To be skilled with words and to emphasize causality—
what else could this lead to but an unending state of torment?
Action and speech are contrived, and the mind indulges
in labeling.

These serve only to obscure the authentic nature of phenomena.
What other “antidote” could be greater than this?
Therefore, whenever there is freedom from contrivance,
from the machinations of samsara and nirvana,
this is great perfection itself.
What could there be other than this?

The view of great perfection is to realize that the ten attributes—view, samaya, empowerment, mandala, levels, paths, activity, timeless awareness, fruition, and the nature of phenomena—are attributes whose nature is ineffable. *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

Awakened mind is like space.

In the nature of phenomena—the nature of mind, like space—
there is no view to be cultivated, no samaya to be upheld,
no effort to be made in enlightened activity, nothing to obscure
timeless awareness,

no levels on which to train, no paths to be traversed,
no subtle factors, no duality, no dependent relationship.
There is no definitive or conclusive statement concerning mind.
Since it is beyond value judgments, there is no specific instruction
to follow or decision to be made.

This is the view of awakened mind, great perfection.

The same source continues:

O great and courageous one,
as for the statement “There is no view to be cultivated,”

because there is no source of phenomena other than me
and because there is no way for me to look at myself,
I do not reveal any object that is not me.

Therefore, I show that “there is no view to be cultivated.”

As for the statement “There is no samaya to be upheld,”
one’s mind cannot deny the fact that it cannot safeguard
anything.

Since there is naturally occurring timeless awareness,
there is nothing to uphold.

The statement “There is no effort to be made in enlightened
activity”

is made because great perfection is timelessly beyond causality.
Enlightened activity is held to accomplish results from causes.
But because great perfection is not held to be a result
and enlightened activity is timelessly effortless,
I show that “there is no effort to be made in enlightened activity.”

As for the statement “There are no paths to be traversed,”
for ordinary beings of the three realms, to awaken
to buddhahood in the three times
the journey is one of traversing the path of awakening mind.
But in mind there is no duality of buddhas and ordinary beings,
and so there are no paths for mind to traverse in mind.

As for the statement “There are no levels on which to train,”
from the perspective of awakened mind, the basic space
of phenomena,
to hold that liberation comes from training is to be involved
with causality.

From the perspective of awakened mind, the basic space
of phenomena,
I do not proclaim that accomplishment is achieved through
contrived training.

As for the statement “Timeless awareness does not conceive
of objects,”
any object could only be naturally occurring timeless awareness,
and timeless awareness cannot be the object of timeless
awareness.

It is shown that, ultimately, within the larger scope nothing need be done:

Striving again and again after phenomena that are exhausting
is like a child making sand castles, for these things are subject
to destruction.

Further, everything entailing effort—all that involves cause
and effect, virtue and harm—
is timelessly embraced within the larger scope of ineffability.

Sand castles are built by children in their playground and are then subject to destruction. Everything that involves body, speech, and mind in effort and achievement is similar to this, for things are held to be established on some relative level and nonexistent on some ultimate level—as in developing a visualization and then gradually dissolving it into emptiness. For one immersed in genuine being, all causes and effects, whether positive or negative, are subsumed within the supreme state beyond all vacillation and effort, in which nothing need be done. *The Great Garuda* states:

There is nothing to be looked at concerning mind, nor can
anyone see its underlying cause.

Therefore, in the absence of harmfulness, what effect can
virtue have?

And *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

Because nothing need be done concerning phenomena,
one proceeds through the doorway of effortlessness.

The same source continues:

O great and courageous one,
desiring something great, one makes efforts in meditation
and other spiritual practice,
but this greatness will not be achieved through such effort.
This greatness occurs naturally; it is forever great.
If one meditates, one contrives the intent of buddhahood.
Those who contrive the intent of buddhahood
will not encounter their own nature for eons.

O great and courageous one,
 do not cultivate meditative absorption with ordinary mind.
 Do not think of timeless awareness as some object.
 There is no need to repeat invocations and essence mantras aloud.
 There is no need to perform ritual hand gestures.
 Do not use the mind to complicate or simplify its nature.
 The absence of wavering is spontaneously ensured by abiding
 in the natural state.
 In abiding naturally, there is nothing for anyone to contrive.
 Abiding on this level just as it is, without effort,
 reveals this to be the most sublime of activities—that nothing
 need be done.
 Having come to understand the ultimate meaning of this,
 do not act;
 in not acting, abide in suchness.
 Whoever abides in suchness ensures that there is no error
 or contrivance.
 “That” refers to the unerring and uncontrived nature;
 “ness” applies this unerring quality to the essence itself.
 There is no “buddhahood,” only suchness.

The same source continues:

Not understanding what simply is, without contrivance,
 some consecrate the universe to purify it.
 Through all the rituals that contribute to enlightenment,
 the deity of timeless awareness that is cultivated in meditation
 is caused to manifest.
 Once offerings are made for a short time, the deity is requested
 to depart,
 and then meditative absorption ends.
 Beginning and ending meditation over and over is like children
 building sand castles.
 This contradicts what is truly meaningful in me—what simply is,
 uncontrived.

This is embraced as the absence of causality and deliberate effort:

Now,³⁰ those who are immersed in the genuine heart essence
 of ati—

having decided that all teachings on causality, which are designed
 to guide the immature,³¹
 are paths for the less fortunate who progress upward in stages—
 embrace the enlightened intent that is the very essence,
 the ultimate meaning that transcends phenomena,
 within the larger scope of space, in which nothing need be done.

During childhood, one's experience is that of play, while in old age this is merely tiring. Likewise, as long as the scope of one's mind remains limited, one's experience is that of the eight lower spiritual approaches, while when one's scope is superior the quintessential experience is that of ati—dwelling in the utter relaxation in which phenomena are resolved. With the realization that dharmakaya is present spontaneously, one abides with nothing to seek or achieve through the ten attributes. *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

O great and courageous one,
 awakened mind is the most majestic of the majestic.
 As for what is created³² by all-creating awakened mind,
 nothing that is created is other than awakened mind.
 Awakened mind is timelessly unerring;
 since it is timeless, there is never any error.
 In the absence of error, things cannot be cloaked in truth
 or falsity.
 All causes, conditions, effects, effort, and achievement
 are transcended.
 There is no greater hindrance to enlightenment
 than being unaware that effort and achievement have already
 been transcended
 and so believing that transcendence is accomplished through
 meditation involving effort, achievement, and activity.
 Without deliberately abiding, without thinking, without
 intending anything whatsoever,
 abide naturally in the nonconceptual state of evenness.
 Since this is timelessly so, the ordinary mind of effort does
 not occur.
 Those who dwell in supreme bliss embody the heart essence
 of all phenomena.
 They do not distinguish between their own welfare and that
 of all others.

The unifying essence that encompasses everything
cannot be viewed, yet is evident in the minds of buddhas
of the three times.

Unobscured, it manifests in the minds of all beings.

Listen, O great and courageous one!
I, the all-creating one, have already ensured benefit for beings.
Others do not need to create the benefit I have already ensured.
Teachings that rely on anything else are not my transmission.
Relative reality is timelessly ensured, perfect within me.
It is timelessly ensured, so there is no need to cultivate view
in meditation.

It is timelessly and totally pure, so there is no need
to observe samaya.

Since everything abides timelessly on the level of enlightenment,
there is no need to train on the levels of masters of awareness
or on the ten levels of realization.

Because effortlessness is timeless and spontaneous,
it is never necessary to engage in enlightened activities that
involve effort.

Since naturally occurring timeless awareness does not conceive
of objects,
it is unnecessary to seek awareness—timeless awareness—
through such objects.

Because supremely blissful dharmakaya is the oneness of mind,
there is no linear time.

In particular, all abundant qualities and all occasions and
contexts are identical,
and because everything is oneness, all is perfect in me.
Since all is perfect in me—great perfection—
view, conduct, activity, samaya, levels, and paths,
as has been explained, do not require effort or achievement.
To be unaware of that and to engage in effort and achievement
conflict with what is ultimately meaningful—the transcendence
of causality—
and so one will not encounter the meaning of supreme bliss—
that nothing need be done.

Owing to the diseases of effort and achievement, awareness has
already gone unrecognized.

Therefore, great perfection beyond causality

is not within the reach of those who lack good fortune,
so they should avail themselves of teachings on causality.

The same source continues:

Those who lack the good fortune to appreciate the ultimate meaning of great perfection
are enmeshed in provisional teachings that deal with causality.
If I revealed timeless transcendence that is beyond finite experience
to those without good fortune who delight in causality,
they would misinterpret it.
If I revealed it, they would thus denigrate their own minds
and would be reborn in the six states, to wander forever
in samsara.

It is shown that one is misled by deliberate action:

Deliberate action misleads—look at the confusing appearances of samsara.
Effort corrupts—think about the machinations of suffering.
With virtue and harm, there is an uninterrupted flow of happiness and suffering.³³
Karma is reinforced, causing one to wander high and low through samsara.
There is no opportunity to escape the ocean of conditioned existence.

Regardless of what spiritual practice one undertakes physically, verbally, or mentally, nonrecognition blinds one to the ultimate meaning of awareness. This is illustrated by the fact that what was produced in previous lifetimes accounts for the variety of apparent phenomena based on confusion that manifest now.

Any efforts one makes poison one's perception of the essence of awareness. Look at the hell beings, tormented spirits, animals, and other beings who are reborn and wander in samsara owing to the karma of having engaged in effort. Even though one acts in a positive way, one merely attains the better aspects of samsara—that is, the

bodies and pleasures of gods and humans—only to have these fall away, so that one continues to wander in samsara. Negative actions result in the suffering of the three lower realms of rebirth, prolonging one's wandering in samsara. There is no opportunity for escape. *The Great Garuda* states:

One will not transcend the three realms with a mind ensnared
by cleverness.³⁴

And *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

If that greatest of medicines—resting in equipoise without
wavering—has not been ensured,
even the causes that lead to higher rebirth will be sullied
by afflictive emotions.
Wandering in samsara forever, one will never discover
flawless peace.

The fact that nothing need be done is embraced as the intent of dharmakaya:

When the flow of virtue and nonvirtue is interrupted,
if there is no union with and then separation from the nature
of phenomena,
there is immersion in genuine being as the definitive
and supreme secret.
One effortlessly³⁵ reaches the primordial level of being,
having gained the majestic palace of dharmakaya—timeless rest.

One immersed in genuine being who, without engaging in any positive or negative actions, does not waver from the scope of awareness, which is empty yet lucid and pure like space, is said to have “gained the majestic palace of dharmakaya.” *The Heaped Jewels* speaks of abiding in the natural place of rest, that of original purity in which nothing need be done:

The nature of phenomena, without foundation,
resting without effort—how truly marvelous!

And *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

However things appear, they are identical in suchness.
 Let no one meddle with this!
 In majestic, uncontrived evenness
 abides the nonconceptual intent of dharmakaya.

The main point is summarized:

Therefore, all things that are reified by the designation of names
 and meanings,
 as well as reactions based on distinctions of better or worse,
 and deliberate efforts involving causality—
 even as³⁶ all these phenomena manifest, they are ineffable
 phenomena,
 like space, in which nothing need be done.
 For whoever understands this, all phenomena are embraced
 within the larger scope of ineffability.

The natural manifestations of awareness—all apparent phenomena, descriptions, and labels of the world of appearances and possibilities, whether of samsara or nirvana, as well as the ground, path, and fruition—are such that their manifesting does not entail their being existent. This is similar to the reflection of the moon on water, the appearance of which does not establish its being the moon. Moreover, awareness, empty yet lucid and unobstructed, is epitomized by timelessly empty space and is understood to be a state that is not contrived, a subtle lucidity that is not sullied, a natural lucidity that is not cultivated in meditation. *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

O great and courageous one, if you want to accomplish
 natural mind,
 you can do it only by not wanting to,
 so do not try to dwell in nonconceptual evenness.
 Abide naturally in the mode that has nothing to do
 with acceptance or rejection.
 Abide as a matter of course in the state that does not waver.
 Mind is the essence of being, just as it is.
 All phenomena are accomplished in suchness.

Given what simply is, do not meddle with anything.

Given the essence itself, do not try to achieve anything else.

If they were to search, even victorious ones would not find
anything that is other than basic space.

Since it is already ensured, there is no need to try to create it now.

Since it is already accomplished, there is no need to try to achieve
it now.

Rest nonconceptually in equipoise, without thinking about
anything.

Listen, O great and courageous one!

Buddhas of previous generations, moreover,
had nothing to contrive or seek out, only their own minds.

They did not contrive what simply is.

They did not cultivate conceptual meditative absorption.

Accomplishment came about through nonconceptual mind itself.

For those who abide now or have yet to appear,
accomplishment also comes about through nonconceptual
evenness.

Coming to the Decisive Experience

Now, with a certainty in one's mind that brings one to the definitive conclusion that all phenomena are by nature ineffable, one comes to the decisive experience of ineffability. First, one comes to an experience of deciding that the limitations one reifies are ineffable:

The decisive experience of ineffability is the ultimate
heart essence.

Since all phenomena of the world of appearances and
possibilities, whether of samsara or nirvana,
are ineffable by nature, they are beyond existence.

Since the way in which they manifest is unceasing, they are
beyond nonexistence.

Since they are neither existent nor nonexistent, they are beyond
being both.

Since there is no such duality, they are beyond being neither.

Since they neither "are" nor "are not," the ultimate heart essence
cannot be characterized as some "thing," for it transcends all
imagination and expression.

Since awareness and all phenomena that manifest within its scope are ineffable by nature,³⁷ they are beyond being existent. Since their mode of manifestation is unceasing, they are beyond being nonexistent. Since they have never been both existent and nonexistent, they are beyond being both. Since it is also not the case that they are neither, they transcend even this conventional fiction. Whatever manifests, whatever arises, even as it does so there is abiding in the enlightened intent in which these four limitations are pristine by nature, as is stated in *The Natural Freedom of Awareness*:

The four distorting limitations are pristine by nature.

And *Naturally Arising Awareness* states:

Like mirages or shifting images on water,
things are not simply nonexistent, nor are they existent.
Because they are beyond both existence and nonexistence,
there is no recollection of them in the mind of one who
is realized.

The essence of awareness is unborn.

The nature of apparent phenomena is unceasing.

The defining characteristic of awareness is its insubstantiality.

The fruition of that awareness is uncontrived.

A decisive experience that those who reify the characteristics of things are worthy of compassion is shown to lie in transcendence of reification and fixation:

Although the nature of phenomena is primordially pure,
immature people—unaware that what is ultimately meaningful
has nothing to do with acceptance or rejection³⁸—
are attached to their own views and so are continuously
imprisoned.

How emotionally afflicted they are—their ideas reify
the characteristics of things.

How confused they are to misconstrue what is ineffable
as having identity.

How wearisome it is to reify extremes though none exist.

How worthy of compassion are those who wander forever
in samsara.

Primordially, the nature of phenomena has nothing to do with acceptance or rejection and does not require that anything be done. However, immature people who cling to the eight lower spiritual approaches cloud the perception of thatness itself with their myriad opinions. They are emotionally afflicted in misconstruing the teachings of their respective approaches as having identity. Their minds are confused by the phenomena that they reify as having characteristics, and their belief in extreme views has made them weary. Since they wander in the cycle of samsara, caught up in dualistic perception, they are worthy of compassion. As *Samantabhadra: Mirror of Enlightened Mind* shows:

Since buddhahood is not developed but occurs naturally,
you err in meditating and trying to achieve buddhahood.

Since enlightenment abides nonconceptually,
you err in creating a basis of virtuous qualities that is composite.

Since the majestic approach of secret mantra is beyond words,
you err in seizing upon words and letters.

Since the ultimate heart essence is birthless and deathless,
you err in thinking in terms of birth and death.

Since dharmakaya is free of all thought,
you err in indulging in various kinds of thinking.

Since sambhogakaya manifests precisely, clear in every way,
you err in your ignorance, reifying samsara.

Since nirmanakaya manifests in harmony with beings,
you err in reifying it as the forms of ordinary beings.

Since the three kayas by their very nature do not unite
and then separate,

you err in perceiving the three as discrete.

Since view and meditation are inseparable, identical in nature,
you err in perceiving view, meditation, and conduct.

Since all phenomena are of the nature of awareness,
you err in perceiving phenomena as ordinary mind.

The heart essence of enlightenment is without error
or obscuration.

How then could one think in terms of error or obscuration?

There is never any error, and obscuration is totally absent.

Since dharmakaya is free of obscuration,
how emotionally afflicted it is to think in terms of either error
or obscuration.

Since dharmakaya is unborn and occurs naturally,
 how thoroughly confused it is to hope that it is otherwise.
 Since awareness is unborn and free of thought,
 how tiresome it is to demonstrate it with words and letters.
 Since sublime knowing is unceasing and arises in and of itself,
 how utterly miserable is the mind that is ignorant and deluded.

One comes to a decisive experience of the transcendence of the karmic consequences of positive and negative actions:

The sun of ultimate reality, naturally occurring awareness,
 is obscured by the clouds of both virtue and harm,

positive and negative,
 and obstructed by the lightning of obsessive efforts to accept
 or reject.

With the continuous downpour of confused perceptions
 of happiness and suffering,

the seeds of samsara ripen into the crops³⁹ of the six kinds
 of beings.

Alas! How worthy of compassion are beings tormented
 in these six states.

In the summertime rain clouds, lightning, and rain join together to obscure the orb of the sun. With the clouds (composite factors of positive and negative karma) and lightning (efforts to accept or reject), rain falls as disparate experiences of happiness and suffering. With this, each individual's perception of the sun of ultimate reality—dharmakaya, naturally occurring timeless awareness—is obscured. To one immersed in genuine being, who has realized thatness itself, those who thus wander perpetually in samsara are seen to be worthy of compassion. *The Great Garuda* states:

In groundlessness, uncontrived and free of anything to rely upon,
 assuming specific postures and trying to relax in lucidity bind one
 to apparent phenomena.

If one's mind is not free of extremes and not unbiased,
 mental analysis and speculation prevent one from experiencing
 the way of abiding.

Without the confidence that comes from resting naturally
 in timeless freedom, in which nothing need be done,

realization is constrained by wishful thinking and fleeting meditative experiences.

Without the key point of resting naturally and not seeking anything,

awareness is obscured by reliance on teachings that concern causality.

The great master Ha Shang spoke in a similar way, and although those with less developed minds could not accept it at the time, in fact what he said holds true. This is kept secret from those who follow lesser spiritual approaches because their minds cannot encompass it, and were they to belittle it, the karma would cause them to fall into lower states of rebirth. *The Tantra of Heaped Jewels* states:

“Do not utter even a word of this among shravakas, pratyekabuddhas, and others! Why is this, you ask? Upon hearing these words, they will become frightened, terrified, and will faint. They will have no interest in the secret mantra approach and so they will repudiate it, and as the inevitable karmic consequence of this they will experience rebirth as beings in a vast hell realm. Therefore, you should not even speak upwind of them, to say nothing of teaching them and their listening.”

Vajra of Speech asked, “O transcendent accomplished conqueror, for what reason are all shravakas and others like this?”

The reply was: “It is because shravakas and pratyekabuddhas are small-minded, having been unsuitable to receive the teachings of the secret mantra approach for countless eons. It is, for example, like trying to pass a bolt of cloth through the eye of a needle when it will not fit and there is no chance of its going through.”

And *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

Keep this naturally occurring timeless awareness, which entails no causes or conditions, extremely secret.

Do not speak of it to those involved with causality.

I advise you to come to a decisive experience of causality:

From the consummate and ultimate perspective of the definitive heart essence,
chains of gold and ropes are equally binding.

Likewise, the spiritual and nonspiritual bind the mind equally.
 Just as light and dark clouds are equally obstructing,
 positive and negative actions equally obscure awareness.
 Therefore, it is crucial that one immersed in genuine being—
 who has realized this to be so—
 transcend all causes and effects, whether positive or negative.

The ultimate meaning of awareness lies in the fact that, in itself, it is immaculate as naked dharmakaya—not sullied by anything, not characterized by anything, and transcending everything—which is compared to the orb of the sun. Regarding all reification, fixation, and deliberate effort concerning phenomena, there are no distinctions to be made, in that these are equally obscuring and binding. This is similar to the fact that light clouds obstruct just as dark clouds do, or that chains of gold bind just as ropes do. *The Text of Copper Letters* states:

Chains of gold and ropes are equally binding.

And *Vajrasattva: Mirror of the Heart* states:

Understand all aspects of awareness to be free of ordinary consciousness, which involves concepts of identity. Similarly, bring this understanding to the point of understanding that all phenomena are unceasing. Bring the understanding of what is unceasing to the point of understanding that it manifests in any way whatsoever. Bring the understanding of what manifests in any way whatsoever to the point of understanding that it is unborn. Bring the understanding of what is unborn to the point of understanding that it does not come or go. Bring the understanding of what does not come or go to the point of understanding that it is nondual. Bring the understanding of what is nondual to the point of understanding that it is absolutely free of limitations. Similarly, bring this understanding to the point of not conceptualizing or thinking about any phenomenon in any way. Bring this understanding of all phenomena to the point of experiencing their essence lucidly and without distraction.

The heart essence is the decisive experience of what is ultimately meaningful:

Naturally occurring timeless awareness arises from within,
the dark night of causality is cleared away,
and the massing clouds of virtue and harm do not amount
to anything whatsoever—

the sun of ultimate reality shines in the sky of the basic space
of phenomena.

This is the decisive experience in the ultimate sense.

The definitive conclusion is reached by virtue of the ineffable
nature of the ten attributes.

This is superior to all spiritual approaches based on either
causes or results.

With naturally occurring dharmakaya arrayed like space, causality (which is comparable to the darkness of the night) is naturally cleared away, while there is purity beyond virtue and harm (which are comparable to massing clouds). It is only natural for the sun to shine—that is, for the heart essence of utter lucidity to “shine” in the basic space of phenomena (sky in the ultimate sense). Since the ineffable nature of the ten attributes is fully evident, the metaphor of the sun shining in a clear sky (sky in the ordinary sense) can be used. *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

The heart essence of everything—this awakened mind,
itself timelessly and spontaneously present by nature—
need not be sought or achieved through the ten attributes.

My nature is like space, the universal metaphor.

In pure space, all is such that it entails no effort;
in pure space, all is such that there is nothing to be sought.
Space, within which all is created, is beyond all effort
and achievement;

so too is the all-creating heart essence, awakened mind.
Because I transcend the entire range of finite experience,
in me there is nothing to view, nor ever anything to cultivate
in meditation.

Likewise, the nature of these ten attributes is such that
for me, the transcendent one, nothing need be done.

Those who follow spiritual approaches based on either
causes or results,
seeking me through the ten attributes, wish to behold me
and my nature.

As though stepping out into space and falling to earth,
they will fail in their attempts to progress by using these
ten attributes.

One comes to a decisive experience of the purity of naturally manifest thought:

Nonmanifest meditative absorption is beyond the range
of meditation.

This self-knowing awareness as such, free of elaboration,
is the decisive experience of the complete resolution
of phenomena.

Phenomena are resolved in it; it, moreover, finds its resolution
in phenomena.

Since this decisive experience has nothing to do with whether
or not there is such resolution,
it is decidedly beyond characterization and expression in terms
of existence or nonexistence.

There is no specific reference point, but rather a supremely
spacious and panoramic state.

Phenomena are resolved, ordinary consciousness is transcended.
How joyful is one immersed in genuine being!

This very state—immersion in genuine being in the past, present,
and future—

is the single basic space of enlightened intent, the uninterrupted
nature of phenomena.

Masters of awareness share a dimension of experience equal
to that of all victorious ones.

This naked awareness, in which phenomena are resolved, is the enlightened intent of dharmakaya in its natural place of rest, the resolution of all phenomena, the supreme original purity in which phenomena are resolved. Ultimately, all phenomena are resolved therein. This awareness, moreover, is such that the term “phenomenon” amounts to nothing but a label. With the final decision that it is beyond characterization and expression, one immersed in genuine being, who has realized suchness, has enlightened intent that is totally free and without any particular point of reference. This is the basic space of realization identical to that of all buddhas of the three times and all those im-

mersed in genuine being. It is termed “the blissful unfolding of supreme joy,” since it arises free of extremes and restrictions—naturally expansive.

The Tantra of the Great and Perfect Dynamic Energy of the Lion discusses the realization that in the ultimate sense there is nothing to be cultivated in meditation:

One does not perceive the ultimate meaning of the nature
of phenomena by cultivating meditative stability.

Naturally manifest meditative absorption is free of conceptual
extremes.

The nature of phenomena, free of elaboration, is equal to the
limits of space.

A pure frame of reference entails no reifying thoughts.

Buddhahood, free of the four limitations, is self-knowing
awareness.

Dharmakaya is beyond the limitations of existence
and nonexistence.

The unique awakened state is free of judgment,
dharmakaya is without the dualism of “is” and “is not,”
and the blissful force of self-knowing awareness is beyond
reifying thoughts.

As for the arising of joy and well-being that comes with the realization of suchness, *The Tantra of the Supreme Array of Inset Gems* states:

The supreme mandala is without any frame of reference
and is unimaginable.

How blissful is the mind that realizes the ultimate meaning
of great perfection!

One comes to a decisive experience of supreme emptiness, which cannot be characterized:

The noncomposite expanse—unchanging and indivisible.

The expanse of naturally occurring timeless awareness—
beyond effort and achievement.

The expanse in which all phenomena are mere names—
beyond imagination and expression.

Within this wholly positive realm, in which nothing need
be done,
regardless of what manifests there is still wholly positive
basic space.

In this basic space of Samantabhadra, apparent phenomena
and emptiness are not better or worse.

When the ineffable is taken as existent, labeling occurs
out of confusion,
yet even while there is labeling, there is no confusion
or its opposite.

One comes to a decisive experience of phenomena being
completely unnameable:
this is the way of abiding that is natural great perfection.

Since awareness is in its very essence without transition or change, it entails no effort or achievement, no differentiation or exclusion, is beyond imagination or expression, and is beyond anything needing to be done—the wholly positive nature. Regardless of how phenomena may appear within its scope—whether as samsara or nirvana, better or worse, and so forth—even as they manifest they are mere labels, since they do not exist in actuality. Furthermore, if one actively investigates these characterizations, one comes to a decisive experience of the purity of the inconceivable and inexpressible nature of phenomena, which cannot be characterized. *Samantabhadra: Mirror of Enlightened Mind* states:

The infinite expanse of enlightenment—unobscured
and totally pure.

Since there is no construct of anything to be obscured,
there is no obscuring factor to be refuted,
and since there is no buddhahood, not even the label
“buddha” exists.

Since there is no reification, not even the label “ordinary being”
exists.⁴⁰

Since there is no conceptualization, confusion due to
nonrecognition does not exist.

Since there is no fixation, the concepts of discursive mind⁴¹
also do not exist.

Since there is no attachment, the habitual patterns of ordinary
mind also do not exist.

Since there is no past, not even the label “future” exists.

Since there is no present, not even the label “afflictive emotion” exists.

Since there is no ultimate reality, not even the label “relative reality” exists.

Since there is no awareness, not even the label “nonrecognition of awareness” exists.

Since there is no buddhahood, not even the label “ordinary being” exists.

Since there are no teachings, not even the label “teacher” exists.

Now, in conclusion, the entire theme is summarized:

Thus, concerning the phenomena of the world of appearances and possibilities, whether of samsara or nirvana, with the decision that there is no question of there being confusion or not,

nirvana is not something to be achieved by renouncing samsara.

With the decision that there is no question of things being born or not,

one transcends objects conceived of as being born or ceasing, as existent or not.

With the decision that there is no question of whether there is purity or impurity,

there is equilibrium—nothing better or worse, no acceptance or rejection.

One has come to a decisive experience of all phenomena within the wholly positive expanse.

Since the essence of all phenomena has never existed as any “thing,” it transcends confusion or a lack of confusion. Since these are transcended, it is beyond the renunciation of samsara or the acceptance of nirvana. It is beyond any question of being born or not, and so is beyond some frame of reference that entails origination or cessation. It is beyond purity or impurity, and so is beyond distinctions of better or worse, acceptance or rejection. One has come to this decisive experience within wholly positive enlightened intent, the ground of being in which phenomena are resolved. Abiding in ineffability, the ultimate heart essence, one has come to a decisive experience that all

causes and effects, whether positive or negative—all that does or does not accord with the teachings—are timelessly equal in awareness, which is empty and has no substance. *The Tantra Without Letters* states:

In the view of naturally occurring timeless awareness, there is no object to be investigated. There were none in the past, there will be none in the future, and none whatsoever manifest in the present. There is no karma. There are no habitual patterns. There is no nonrecognition. There is no mind. There is no discursive consciousness. There is no sublime knowing. There is no samsara. There is no nirvana. There is even no awareness. There is nothing whatsoever that manifests as timeless awareness.

Ah! Since naturally occurring timeless awareness has no life force, it is beyond the limitations of positive or negative. Since there is no deliberate action, outer objects and inner mind are transcended.



Within the scope of nonmanifest awareness, myriad phenomena are totally pure in the ineffability of causes and effects, whether positive or negative,
and so the ultimate meaning of what, like space, entails no effort or achievement
has been explained in this precious commentary that analyzes the first topic.
Individuals of the highest acumen and good fortune,
learned ones who have heard many teachings and undergone excellent training,
accomplished gods and demigods, masters of mantras of awareness,
and vast hosts of oath-bound guardians—rejoice in this!

From *The Precious Treasury of the Way of Abiding*, this is the commentary on the first vajra topic, reaching the definitive conclusion concerning the utter inexpressibility of all phenomena.

2

The Theme of Openness

Now, the second vajra topic is that of ascertaining the nature of openness—showing that all phenomena are such that they cannot be defined by restrictions or extremes. This is considered under four headings: revealing the key point, discerning the implications, embracing the larger scope, and coming to the decisive experience.

Revealing the Key Point

This first heading is demonstrated concisely:

Having come to a thorough understanding of the way of abiding
as ineffability,
one reaches the definitive conclusion that its nature is openness.
The transmission of atiyoga, the very pinnacle of all spiritual
approaches, is like space, without limit or center.
The greatest of the great is the spacious mind of Samantabhadra,
its nature a supreme and uninterrupted evenness.

Awareness, empty yet lucid, without limit or center, is dharmakaya as an uninterrupted openness—atiyoga, the spacious mind of Samantabhadra—like space in that it is not defined by restrictions or extremes. It is “the supreme and inexpressible state beyond ordinary consciousness.” *The Six Expanses* states:

In the inexpressible nature of mind
words manifest, yet have no underlying basis.¹

I, Samantabhadra, have revealed,
“This is beyond the scope of expression or imagination.”

And *The Natural Freedom That Underlies Characteristics* states:

The transmission of atiyoga, the very pinnacle of all spiritual approaches,
is the highest point of all, like a majestic mountain.
The greatest of the great, the spacious mind of Samantabhadra,
overwhelms the eight spiritual approaches by its own power.
Similarly, awareness is, by its own power, an expanse
of evenness,
a supreme evenness, a single vast expanse in which
there is no question of whether or not there is realization,
whether or not there is freedom.

The essence of openness is revealed:

Since manifest phenomena—the world of appearances
and possibilities—and nonmanifest awakened mind
do not waver from what simply is, unembellished,
there is freedom from concepts, with no framework
of limit or center.

The nature of openness abides, supreme and uninterrupted.

In that all phenomena manifest naturally, their essence is not defined by restrictions or extremes, and so the ground aspect is openness. No conceptual framework or reification is imposed by ordinary consciousness, and so the path aspect is openness. There is no hope or fear, no transition or change, and so the fruition aspect is openness. Apparent phenomena do not waver from awareness, and so basic space is openness. Moreover, awareness, the essence of awakened mind, abides timelessly as an uninterrupted openness free of restrictions—“the nature of phenomena that never wavers.” *Overwhelming the Six Modes of Consciousness with Splendor* states:

Bringing mastery over samsara, nirvana, and all spiritual
approaches,
the oneness in which nothing need be done overwhelms
everything with its splendor.

There is nothing that could constitute a limitation anywhere.

There is nowhere to stray from the single expanse in which
nothing need be done.

Freedom from anything needing to be done—the very expanse
of Samantabhadra.

Openness is shown to be like space, without the bias of dualistic perception:

Even as they appear, all phenomena² that manifest as objects
have no aspects or substance, and so there is expansive openness.
Moreover, mind—self-knowing awareness—is not divisible

into earlier and later³

and so, just as it is, constitutes an expansive openness, like space.
With the past having ceased, the future yet to come,
and no remaining in the present, the scope of awakened mind
has no foundation or substance and transcends being an object
that can be characterized.

Natural openness is the infinite dimension of space.

Three factors—objects, ordinary mind, and awareness as the ground of both of these—constitute an expansive openness; given this, all apparent objects are natural forms of emptiness that do not consist of atoms or components. They are thus pure in being empty throughout the three times, having no partial aspects or substance, and so their essence is openness. There is openness in the unceasing appearance of things, for they are inconceivable and cannot be quantified. There is openness in that whatever arises in the mind is itself empty, for there is no moment of consciousness left to divide. There is openness in the arising of the unceasing myriad display. There is openness in that awareness, empty yet lucid, has neither limit nor center. And there is openness in that there is one basic space that cannot be fragmented and in which everything occurs.

In timeless and ultimate buddhahood—the very essence of purity beyond dualistic perception—objects and mind manifest such that they are naturally unsullied and naturally lucid. All apparent objects are forms of emptiness; all mental states arise naturally. These do not go beyond naturally occurring timeless awareness—the simultaneity of awareness and emptiness. *The All-Illuminating Sphere* states:

The ultimate meaning of view—that there is nothing to be viewed—is revealed.

This is the view that has no particular point of reference.

Since timeless awareness, having no substance, is unobstructed, this self-knowing awareness is spontaneously present.

Since there is nothing other than this,

anything within the individual's self-knowing timeless awareness is the radiance of that supreme awareness.

This timeless state is the accomplished conqueror Vajradhara.

Therefore, within the ground of being,

perfect buddhahood is not some object,

for there is total purity beyond dualistic perception.

Self-knowing awareness abides within its own radiance.

Space, pure by nature, is permeated by the ultimate “sky” of the nature of phenomena.

In the ultimate sky of the nature of phenomena

shines the sun of self-knowing timeless awareness,

illuminating everything without distinction or bias.

Openness is shown to entail neither activity nor effort:

In the ultimate heart essence, with no extreme or bias,
there is no framework of view, empowerment, mandala, mantra
repetition, levels, paths, samaya, training, or progress.

Rather, there is expansive openness in supreme spaciousness
that is free of any basis.

This is fulfilled within awakened mind, the nature
of phenomena.

In the essence of awareness, there is no view, empowerment, mandala, mantra, levels, paths, or samaya whatsoever. And so all words that describe them and all contrived actions that they entail are pointless, because what is ultimately meaningful about the enlightened intent of openness—of purity in which nothing need be done—is beyond being benefited or harmed. *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

O great and courageous one,
this nature of mine is difficult to fathom.

There are eight factors—access, view, samaya,

enlightened activity, paths to be traversed, states of attainment, timeless awareness, and the nature of phenomena—as well as the three kayas and five spiritual approaches.

My view and conduct do not accord with these other approaches. As for access, there is entrance through the doorway that cannot be sought.

I have shown that view is not to be cultivated.

I have shown that samaya is not to be upheld.

I have shown that enlightened activity is not to be sought.

I have shown that there are no paths to be traversed.

I have shown that states of attainment are not to be developed.

Timeless awareness is nonconceptual and immutable.

The nature of phenomena, what simply is, is not to be contrived.

Spontaneous presence is shown to be naturally pure openness:

All phenomena, however they manifest,
are sacred in being unborn by their very nature,
and so are spontaneously present—unceasing and not abiding
in any specific way.

Since there is total purity, free of any framework of existence
or nonexistence,
the nature of phenomena is expansive openness, great perfection.

Since all manifest aspects of the simultaneity of awareness and emptiness are timelessly unborn, they abide like the moon's reflection on water, their sacredness in being unborn permeating them just as wetness does water. While appearing clearly—unceasing and naturally manifest—they abide in the total purity that is their very essence. This is the nature of phenomena—expansive openness, great perfection. The simultaneity of apparent phenomena and emptiness is spontaneously present within the scope of awakened mind. *Cutting Through the Three Times* states:

United as one, everything is the basic space of oneness.

Oneness is without origination—the unborn basic space
of phenomena.

The magical displays that are born within unborn basic space
are thoroughly indeterminate and completely unrestricted.

Natural lucidity is shown to be supreme openness:

In awareness, the ultimate heart essence of enlightenment,
there is no holding to extreme views, but rather freedom
from bias based on characteristics.⁴
There is no conclusion to be reached through theories
of language or knowledge.
It is beyond characterization,⁵ can be neither affirmed
nor denied,
neither increases nor decreases, and neither comes nor goes.
Given total purity in the supreme spaciousness of spontaneous
evenness,
there is uninterrupted openness, free of all extremes or bias.

Since the essence of awareness itself has no substance or characteristics, it has never existed in any extreme or biased way. Since it is free of conceptual or verbal elaboration, it cannot be understood through theories of language or knowledge. Since the essence of being cannot be pinpointed, there is expansive openness in what is beyond characterization, can be neither affirmed nor denied, neither increases nor decreases, and neither comes nor goes. Within the scope of awareness, its natural radiance arises, without being localized, as the display of Samantabhadra. As such, whatever arises is not beyond the scope of awareness. The world of appearances and possibilities, whether of samsara or nirvana, converges within the bhaga of Samantabhadra, and so there is expansive openness in the oneness of the supreme sphere of being. *The All-Illuminating Sphere* states:

In self-knowing awareness—having no substance, timelessly
pure, and unobstructed—
there is timeless and total purity beyond substance and
characteristics.
The face of Samantabhadra gazes in all the ten directions.
There is convergence within the single expanse of bliss,
the bhaga of the mother consort.
The three realms are, without exception, the supreme sphere
of being.

Supreme openness arises naturally:

In enlightened intent there is no occurrence of or involvement
 with hope or fear,
 and so there is uninterrupted openness, regardless of what arises.
 In this naturally arising, unbiased, and unrestricted state—
 what simply is—
 there is never a chance of being caught within the cage
 of reification.

Whatever arises does so as the display of natural dynamic energy arising within the scope of awareness (like waves on water) or as movement within its naturally unsullied state (like fish swimming in the ocean). To engage in that movement without viewing it with any bias is “uninterrupted openness in which things simultaneously arise and are free.” *The All-Illuminating Sphere* states:

In the ocean of naturally occurring timeless awareness,
 any thoughts stirring in the conceptual mind
 are golden fish swimming in that ocean.

And *The Direct Encounter with the Three Kayas* states:

However thinking occurs, it occurs within its own context.
 However concepts occur, they occur within their own context.
 In awakened mind, there is never any thinking or concepts.
 The mind of victorious ones of the three times is free of
 conceptualization.

The state in which phenomena are resolved is shown to be the ultimate meaning of openness:

Since all things come back to openness,
 their nature is beyond the extreme⁶ of denial or affirmation.
 Just as the universe will disappear within the realm of space,
 denial and affirmation, attachment and aversion, vanish
 in original basic space.
 Since they do not go anywhere, thought patterns leave no trace.
 Given expansive openness⁷ within the scope of uninterrupted
 awareness,
 the limitations of holding to hope and fear are transcended.⁸

The tethering stake of dualistic mind is pulled free.
The "city" of the confusing perceptions of samsara is emptied.

Clouds form in the sky and fade in that context. Likewise, initially all phenomena occur within basic space, and in the final analysis they are freed therein as well. With such realization, mind and all mental events—denial and affirmation, attachment and aversion, and so forth—revert to the original source, the empty sphere of being. This is the pith instruction that ordinary mind, the confusion of samsara, is pristine in its timeless purity. This constitutes abiding in naturally empty and unbiased openness. *The Natural Freedom That Underlies Characteristics* states:

Since underlying causes revert to the single sphere of being,
hope and fear about goals are cut through—a realm equal
to space.

Expansive, vast, and equal to space—the enlightened mind
of victorious ones.

No renunciation or attainment—the expanse of the single sphere
of being.

Freedom in its own ground—no question of whether or not there
is realization.

In summary:

Therefore, the dynamic energy of display is external—
phenomena that manifest as objects—
and internal—the manner in which one's mind arises.
For those who understand everything to be timelessly empty
and open,
all phenomena⁹ are revealed within the key point of openness.

No phenomenon goes beyond either awareness or its dynamic energy. Since awareness in its very essence is without conceptual or verbal elaboration and is the source of all possible phenomena, there is expansive openness in that it is not defined by restrictions or extremes. Outwardly, all apparent objects manifest from the dynamic energy of awareness, but this natural radiance is misconstrued as having identity, and so they arise like a woman one has seen before who

appears in one's dreams. Inwardly, the eight modes of consciousness—mind and all mental events that entail reification—arise due to the unceasing avenue of responsiveness being misconstrued as having identity. All that manifests in the duality of object and subject arises as adornment and display from the dynamic energy that is the natural manifestation of awareness. Moreover, in actuality this all constitutes forms of emptiness—clearly apparent yet ineffable, having never existed outwardly or inwardly as anything—and so there is expansive openness in this ineffability. Once their nature has been realized, they are experienced as free in that they abide naturally and straightforwardly, without having to be renounced, and are similar to appearances in dreams or illusions. *The Great Garuda* states:

Mind is such that it is never defined by extremes.

It seems to everyone that the lower states of samsara exist,
but in truth they do not, being like dreams, illusions, or castles
in the sky.

It is impossible for these false perceptions to carry the weight
of truth.

Discerning the Implications

Now, the implications of openness can be discerned. One implication that can be discerned is that, in the absence of dualistic perceptions, openness is wholly positive:

Concerning the facets of the nature of phenomena,
one implication that can be discerned
is that they constitute self-knowing timeless awareness
as openness, empty yet lucid.

Not constrained by being perceived as a subject, beyond
being perceived as an object,
and without any point of reference, wide-open clarity
is unrestricted.

Enlightened intent—undistracted, for all recollection
has been exhausted—
is expansive openness like space, neither meditation
nor nonmeditation.

This is the vast expanse of enlightened intent, wholly positive.

Regardless of how consciousness arises in response to apparent phenomena, to rest yet remain alert within an expansive, naked, and naturally pristine state, without prolonging thought processes, is to discern the implications of ultimate and wholly positive enlightened intent as supreme and uninterrupted openness. *The Great Garuda* states:

Freedom in all its immediacy—naturally pure, boundless,
completely perfect—
is that which is naturally evident in freedom from the limitations
of dualism.
The implications of the vast expanse free of anything needing
to be done, unsought and supreme,
can be discerned, without action or speech, within the “interval”
between form and emptiness.

The unrestricted relaxation of the six modes of consciousness is one of the implications that can be discerned:

In this spacious and vast expanse of awareness, empty yet lucid,
although an unceasing variety of characteristics arises,
the sense faculties perceive this in all its freshness.¹⁰
Awareness is clearly evident as the nature of phenomena.
Things appear freely, consciousness is blissful,
however it arises,
and the six modes of consciousness are relaxed—this is the
naturally arising expanse of timeless awareness.
Since this is utterly lucid—unobstructed, without division into
outer or inner—
it is spontaneously present within the supreme, uncontrived state
of resting in genuine being.

Within the scope of awareness, empty yet lucid, when one is resting openly in supreme natural lucidity that entails no reifying concepts, outwardly apparent phenomena are unrestricted and naturally vivid, while the six modes of sense consciousness are relaxed. There is complete openness, for while apparent objects manifest, they have never existed as the objects one perceives. They are unceasing and clearly apparent within the unborn expanse, arising in the supreme,

uncontrived state of resting in genuine being—that is, utter lucidity without division between outer and inner—like the arising of reflections on a limpid sea. *The Tantra Without Letters* states:

The pure enlightened intent of “imperturbable rest that is like the ocean”

is not some apparent phenomenon, nor does it cause anything to appear.

It is not empty, nor does it exist as emptiness.

It is not mere lucidity, but the realm of supreme lucidity.

It is not mental laxity, and mental agitation is absent as a matter of course.

It has never wavered, does not waver, and will never waver.

It has never varied, does not vary, and is beyond all variation.

Behold the supreme method of resting, which is not brought about deliberately.

Do not try to complicate or simplify it.

This unique state of imperturbable rest

is not one of holding still, yet there is no going beyond it.

In secret timeless awareness, which is like an ocean, rest in basic space, in timeless spontaneous vastness

that is not created.

In this great ocean, whose depths are difficult to fathom, behold the pinnacle of the victory banner that never falls.

Mind in its essence is ineffable—the supremely uncontrived kaya.

Not produced, it is victorious over all deliberate attempts to produce it.

Never having come into being, it is uncontrived and imperturbable rest itself.

Unaltered by apparent phenomena, it is not contrived by ordinary consciousness.

Abiding in the sky of the nature of phenomena is revealed to be enlightened intent.

Another implication that can be discerned is that the natural state of utter relaxation is supreme openness:

Like an easygoing person who has nothing more to do, body and mind rest in whatever way is comfortable, without tension or looseness.

Awareness is an expansive openness,¹¹ like the clear sky, abiding within the realm of the basic space of phenomena, not uniting with and then separating from it.

Like an old person whose task is complete, one is content: body and speech are at ease and mind is utterly relaxed in its natural condition. Thus, objects and mind are free in their nonduality, naturally abiding in openness—dharmakaya, awareness that is empty yet lucid. *The Direct Encounter with the Three Kayas* states:

Awakened mind is the actual support of everything.
Although an unceasing variety of characteristics arises,
the sense faculties perceive this in all its freshness.
The nature of phenomena is clearly evident in whatever
manifests.

Things appear freely, the natural expression of awareness
is blissful,
and the six kayas are unobstructed.

This is the naturally arising expanse of timeless awareness.
Since this is utterly lucid—unobscured, without division
into outer or inner—

naturally manifest forms appear in the mirror of mind,
self-knowing awareness.

Within the scope of natural manifestation, there is no distraction
or lack of distraction.

Mind and body are profoundly relaxed—uncontrived and
genuinely present.

Like an easygoing person who has nothing more to do,
mind and body rest in whatever way is comfortable, for there is
no tension or looseness.

The degree of realization that comes from gaining confidence in enlightened intent is shown:

In the skylike realization of the nature of phenomena,
empty yet lucid,
there is unfettered awareness—uninterrupted and expansive
openness—
unbound by reification, transcending all thought and
recollection.

Everything is complete openness,¹² encompassed within
the single expanse of enlightened intent.

A blissful mind blends with the blissful ground of being¹³—
the realm of awakened mind, in which outer and inner
are of one taste.

This is to perceive the way of abiding, the nature in which
phenomena are resolved.

Although they manifest outwardly, sense objects are innately pure, since they cannot be reified by any analytic framework. Although it arises inwardly, mind is innately pure, since it is not polarized from these. Without favoring either apparent phenomena or mind, there is wide-open clarity in uninterrupted openness. Supremely blissful awareness—mind abiding naturally—blends and becomes one with the supremely blissful nature of phenomena, which is the ground of being in its natural place of rest. With this, one immersed in genuine being is led to the way of abiding—the nature in which phenomena are resolved—attains ongoing bliss, and so gains confidence in that way of abiding. This is termed the “upwelling of realization through true perception of the nature of phenomena.” *The Perfect Dynamic Energy of the Lion* refers to

the ultimate meaning of supreme bliss that occurs naturally
and entails no reifying thought.

If the truth of buddhahood is perceived, one is an heir
to victorious ones.

If realization is mastered thoroughly, there is always bliss.
If all that occurs arises as an ally, perception is pure.

The main point is summarized:

At the very moment that ideas form about sense impressions,
natural mind remains open, with perception blissful
and spacious.

The major implication that can be discerned is that uninterrupted
openness
is naturally radiant¹⁴ and naturally lucid, unconstrained
by reification.

In brief, when sense consciousness arises immediately upon the manifestation of sense objects, without their being constrained by reification one remains undistracted in spacious bliss, which is naturally lucid and naturally unsullied. This is known as “discerning the implications of openness,” because there is freedom from reification, which imposes restrictions. *The Great Garuda* states:

The implications of the threefold encounter—the display that manifests as an objective field of experience—can be discerned within the “interval” between sense objects and mind, with nothing that arises being rejected.

Embracing the Larger Scope

Now, the larger scope of openness is embraced. It is to openness that the timeless seal of vajra basic space is applied:

In the spacious sky in which the reification of objects and mind is cleared away,
awareness, free of the turmoil of thought,
is embraced within the scope of naturally unsullied openness:
the “vajra dance” is the unrestricted and uninterrupted nature of phenomena.

Timeless awareness, equal to the basic space of suchness,
is the timeless application of the natural seal of wholly positive enlightened intent.

Within the scope of awareness, uninterrupted like space, all that manifests—objects or mind—is timelessly embraced within the vajra theme of nonorigination. So with the realization that any apparent phenomenon or consciousness that arises is the dynamic energy and display of awareness, one embraces this without rejection or acceptance by allowing it to be free within supreme spaciousness. Awareness is the vajra theme: insofar as there is arising, there is nothing other than awareness that arises within the scope of awareness. Awareness is referred to as “the sun of timeless vajra awareness, the pinnacle of the victory banner that never falls.” *The Perfect Dynamic Energy of the Lion* states:

How marvelous!
 The vajra of self-knowing awareness is timeless awareness
 blazing everywhere.
 The naturally manifest vajra without characteristics blazes
 in all directions.
 The radiantly fearless vajra is supreme emptiness.
 The immaculate vajra of what is subtle and coarse blazes
 intensely.
 The great vajra crown is all-pervasive emptiness.
 The limitless vajra is not conferred, but naturally perfect.
 The limitless vajra is samaya that is beyond being upheld.

The universal scope of awakened mind is revealed:

Just as myriad dreams are subsumed within sleep,
 being natural manifestations that are empty and without
 true existence,
 so too the phenomena of the universe, whether of samsara
 or nirvana, are embraced by mind.
 They manifest within mind, the vast expanse, but have no
 substance.

Regardless of what dream images arise, they are subsumed within the realm of sleep, and so manifest naturally as empty, as lacking true existence. Similarly, all phenomena that manifest as the universe, whether of samsara or nirvana, are embraced by awareness—awakened mind—and since they manifest within mind, they should be understood to be the display of awareness, clearly apparent yet ineffable.

The All-Creating Monarch states:

Because all this has been created by me, all-creating
 awakened mind,
 everything that comprises the universe of appearances
 and possibilities,
 including all buddhas and ordinary beings,
 is such that there is nothing other than awakened mind.
 Because, timelessly, nothing need be done
 and because, moreover, I have shown everything to be
 awakened mind,
 the crucial import of this fundamental point has been revealed.

This is the larger scope of openness itself:

Just as the entire vast universe has no limit or center
in the expanse of space, but is uninterrupted openness,
so, within the expanse of awareness, all that manifests
outwardly or inwardly—objects or mind—
is subsumed within openness and is naturally manifest
and empty.¹⁵

This is the larger scope of awakened mind that embraces
all phenomena.

Openness is revealed to be unbiased, free of dualistic perception.

The inanimate universe, as enormous as it is, and the six kinds of beings, as countless and endless as they are, are embraced within the single expanse of supreme basic space. So too, as inconceivable as they are, the phenomena of the world of appearances and possibilities, whether of samsara or nirvana, are timelessly embraced within supreme and originally pure awareness. One should realize that they are none other than the manifestation, in light of awareness, of empty appearances that are ineffable. *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

All phenomena, regardless of how they manifest,
and natural mind are timelessly of the same nature,
so do not think of¹⁶ this in terms of traditions based
on either causes or results.

When one examines the suchness of natural mind,
what manifests is essence, one's own enlightenment.

The same source continues:

Since the domain of mind, the vast expanse, is enormous,
there is not a single thing that does not abide therein.

The empty essence of naturally manifest phenomena and the empty nature of mind are identical in their emptiness, so they are said to be “embraced by supreme emptiness within a single basic space.”

Awareness is the larger scope that cannot be imagined or expressed:

This awakened mind that embraces all phenomena, moreover,
is without extreme or bias and is subsumed within supreme
openness.

It is like infinite space that embraces the universe,
without limit or center, beyond all imagination or description.

Given that all phenomena are embraced within awareness, that awareness¹⁷ is embraced within uninterrupted openness, beyond imagination or description, not defined by restrictions or extremes. Openness is shown to be the nature of totally pure space, as *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

All phenomena have the characteristic of space.
The characteristic of space is suchness itself.
The characteristics of the three kayas abide thus.
Everything abides in suchness itself.
However they manifest, all phenomena,
being just as they are, cannot be improved upon.

The source of everything is revealed within the larger scope of awareness:

In awareness, a supreme evenness free of extremes,
phenomena—the world of appearances and possibilities,
whether of samsara or nirvana—arise ceaselessly.
Even as they arise, neither mind nor phenomena can be
characterized as “things.”
They are embraced within openness, the nature of phenomena.

All phenomena of the world of appearances and possibilities, whether of samsara or nirvana, arise within awareness, manifest within awareness, and are freed within awareness, so they are embraced within awareness. Phenomena and awareness, moreover, are embraced within openness, the nature of phenomena beyond characterization or description, and so are totally pure by nature. *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

Therefore, the entire universe of appearances and possibilities
is such that everything abides within the realm of space.
Buddhas, ordinary beings, and the universe all abide
in the same way,
given the vast domain of the supreme expanse of awakened mind.
In the totally pure nature of phenomena, everything is nondual,
free of all exaggeration or denigration.

The meaning of the wholly positive vajra theme is summarized:

The seal of awakened mind, beyond which no one goes,
is timelessly applied through supreme and wholly positive
spaciousness,
is embraced by the enlightened intent of the guru, protector
of beings and spiritual master,
and is itself sealed as the ever-awakened state, the vajra heart
essence.

This definitive meaning of the supreme secret is not within
the reach of anyone who is not of the highest intelligence
and good fortune.

The theme of the vajra pinnacle is that there is no transition
or change.

Although this vast expanse of enlightened intent—utterly lucid,
self-knowing awareness—

is within oneself, it is difficult to always realize this.

It is seen through the grace of the guru, glorious protector
and spiritual master.

It is termed “all phenomena embraced within uninterrupted
openness.”

Since there is no phenomenon that is not included within awak-
ened mind—that is, awareness—we say that “no one goes beyond the
embrace of mind.” Indeed, *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

There is no phenomenon other than what is included
within mind.

No phenomenon of samsara or nirvana wavers from the expanse
of Samantabhadra, the nature of phenomena. *Overwhelming the Six
Modes of Consciousness with Splendor* states:

Within the wholly positive context itself, free of anything needing
to be done,
samsara is wholly positive, nirvana is positive . . .

The definitive meaning of ati depends on whether blessings—
which derive from the seal of the guru’s sacred enlightened intent be-
ing applied—are present or not. *The Heart Essence of Secrets* states:

The elusive and hidden meaning that is elicited abides in the teacher—vajra mind.

As this shows, that which is ultimately meaningful is the “enlightened intent of the vajra pinnacle.” This itself is not within the reach of anyone who is not of the highest intelligence. *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

Countless eons ago, those who had faith in me,
 all-creating enlightenment—
 those with the suitable karma and good fortune,
 utterly immersed in genuine being—
 had no view to cultivate in meditation, no samaya to uphold,
 no enlightened activity involving effort,¹⁸ no paths to traverse,
 no levels of realization on which to train, no causality,
 no twofold division¹⁹ into ultimate and relative,
 nothing to cultivate in meditation or achieve,
 no motivation to be aroused, and no antidotes.
 So that they might perceive the nature of²⁰ all-creating mind,
 I revealed it for just this purpose.

Moreover, the ultimate meaning of utterly lucid enlightened intent—beyond description or imagination and perceived through the grace of the guru—is openness, for it goes beyond the limitation of existence or nonexistence. *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

Extremely immediate timeless awareness, utterly unimaginable,
 is like a precious gem bestowed by all spiritual mentors.

Coming to the Decisive Experience

Now, one comes to the decisive experience of openness in the ineffability of outer and inner objects:

The decisive experience of openness is the ultimate heart essence.
 Outer phenomena are unborn, the scope of emptiness.
 They are beyond characterization or expression, since they do not
 abide in any specific way and neither come nor go.
 There is no division between inner phenomena arising
 and being free.

They are like the traces of a bird in the sky—no frame
of reference applies.²¹

All phenomena in the outer environment that manifest in light of awareness are empty, like reflections that are clearly apparent yet ineffable. All inner phenomena are like the traces left by a bird flying in the sky, manifesting as mental stirrings yet fading naturally from one's awareness. Since these have never existed as anything, consciousness arises ceaselessly within the unborn ground of awareness, so the ground of being as it manifests is primordially free of any context in which it can be imagined. *The Tantra of Precious Blazing Remains* states:

In that the ground of being manifests as apparent phenomena
that are ineffable by nature,
it manifests as phenomena that are indescribable, inconceivable,
and inexpressible.

All of this abides naturally and timelessly in the equalness
of the three times.

One comes to a decisive experience of the simultaneity of awareness and emptiness, which is beyond causality:

Objects and mind, just as they are—and even naturally occurring
awareness—

are mere labels and beyond characterization or expression.
They are free of elaboration.

Since, as with space, there is no creator, this is the realm
of emptiness, involving no effort or achievement,
beyond good or bad, positive or negative, and beyond²²
causality.

The ten attributes do not apply.

Completely spacious openness, the expanse free of
characterization or expression,
is timelessly empty, with no question of its being a phenomenon
or not.

It does not partake of existence.

In great perfection, free of ordinary consciousness,
one comes to a decisive experience of the inconceivable
and inexpressible nature.

Objects and mind appear but are not what they appear to be. Moreover, the essence of awareness is like space, is the resolution of phenomena beyond ordinary consciousness, and is beyond the scope of the ten attributes in that it does not entail causes or effects, whether positive or negative. One comes to a decisive experience of the even state of uninterrupted openness, which is inconceivable and inexpressible. *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

Since I am the very heart of everyone's enlightenment,
there is no secret source of pith instructions elsewhere.

Because I am beyond all exaggeration or denigration,
I have decisively experienced all phenomena.

Since there is no object, only me,
I have also decisively experienced that there is no view
to be cultivated in meditation.

Because there is nothing to be upheld, only me,
I have also decisively experienced that there is no samaya
to be upheld.

Because there is nothing to be sought, only me,
I have also decisively experienced that there is no enlightened
activity to be sought.

Because there is nowhere to abide, only me,
I have also decisively experienced that there are no levels
of realization on which to train.

Because obscurations are timelessly absent in me,
I have also decisively experienced that I am naturally occurring
timeless awareness.

Because I am unborn, the nature of phenomena,
I have also decisively experienced that I am the subtle nature
of phenomena.

Because there is nowhere to journey, only me,
I have also decisively experienced that there are no paths
to traverse.

Because buddhas, ordinary beings, and the universe
of appearances and possibilities
all occur due to me—enlightenment, the heart essence—
I have also decisively experienced timeless nonduality.
Because I epitomize naturally occurring timeless awareness,
I have also decisively experienced that I am the supreme lightning
transmission.

Because all phenomena are none other than me,
I, the all-creating one, am the decisive experience of everything.



The heart essence of phenomena is awakened mind.
The world of appearances and possibilities, whether of samsara
or nirvana,
is naturally manifest, empty form.
The ultimate meaning of indivisible openness, beyond the realm
of the imagination,
has been explained in this precious commentary that analyzes
the second topic.
Victorious ones of the three times, masters of awareness,
guardians, accomplished yogins,
together with a multitude of oath-bound ones,
faithful and fortunate individuals of the very highest acumen,
and hosts of dakinis—rejoice in this!

From *The Precious Treasury of the Way of Abiding*, this is the com-
mentary on the second vajra topic, reaching the definitive conclusion
concerning the supreme and uninterrupted openness of everything.

3

The Theme of Spontaneous Presence

Now, all phenomena are shown to be timelessly and spontaneously present. This is considered under four headings: revealing the key point, discerning the implications, embracing the larger scope, and coming to the decisive experience.

Revealing the Key Point

First, spontaneous presence is shown to be like a gem:

Furthermore,¹ the nature of spontaneous presence
is not created by anyone, for it abides timelessly.
Like a gem that provides everything, awakened mind
serves as the ground that is the source of all phenomena
of samsara and nirvana.

Just as the original qualities of a gem are always naturally perfect, so awareness—awakened mind—is always spontaneously present as the basic space, or ground, of all phenomena, and its qualities are such that its essence has never existed as anything, while its dynamic energy arises as anything whatsoever. *Cutting Through the Three Times* states:

Since spontaneous presence, without division into outer or inner,
cannot be defined by extremes,
there is no possible limit—awareness is spacious like the sky.
The nature of phenomena is an infinite expanse, without
constraints.

It is all-pervasive, with no division into above, below, or any direction.

Unborn, unceasing, and encompassed within the single sphere of being,

it has no final limit, for all that is wished for comes from it alone.

With no increase or decrease, it is a treasury of precious gems.

And *The Direct Encounter with the Three Kayas* states:

Within the expanse of spontaneous presence is the ground from which everything comes.

Since continuous adornment (enlightened form, speech, and mind),

positive qualities, and enlightened activity come from it, without being defined by extremes,

the basic space of phenomena is a precious gem that fulfills all wishes.

Without having to be sought, everything is spontaneously present.

And *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

This awakened mind, the heart essence of everything, in itself timelessly and spontaneously present by nature, need not be sought or achieved through the ten attributes.

The ground of being as it manifests is shown to be supreme spontaneous presence:

Just as the world of appearances and possibilities manifests from the realm of space,²

samsara and nirvana arise ceaselessly from awakened mind.

Just as various dreams occur during sleep,

the six kinds of beings and the three realms arise within the context of ordinary mind.

Even as they arise, all phenomena constitute the scope of awareness.

They are the supreme manifestation of the ground of being—empty yet spontaneously present.

Just as the universe manifests within the realm of space, samsara and nirvana arise within the scope of awareness as its unceasing dynamic energy. Of what are they the dynamic energy, you wonder? Just as dreams arise from the dynamic energy of sleep, owing to nonrecognition of awareness beings of the three realms and the apparent phenomena of the universe manifest from the dynamic energy that arises as ordinary mind—the eight modes of consciousness. Like confused perceptions manifesting from the dynamic energy of a virulent fever, the apparent phenomena of samsara arise naturally from the confusion of ordinary mind, yet even as they arise they are pure as natural manifestations of emptiness. *The Direct Encounter with the Three Kayas* states:

Within the expanse of spontaneous presence is the ground
from which everything comes.

All that manifests as form—the outer environment and the beings
within it—

is enlightened form that is not defined by extremes, arising
as continuous adornment.

Sounds and voices, whether heard as excellent, average,
or inferior,

are enlightened speech that is not defined by extremes, arising
as continuous adornment.

The inseparability of everything—oneness in the heart essence
of ultimate reality—

is enlightened mind that is not defined by extremes, arising
as continuous adornment.

Nonduality is shown to be spontaneous presence:

Moreover, the ground of being and the mode by which it arises
as apparent phenomena

are by nature beyond being identical or separate

and are timelessly and spontaneously present, arising through the
avenue of awareness.

As the dynamic energy of its display, the two modes—samsara
and nirvana—manifest distinctly as impure and pure,
yet even in manifesting neither is better or worse, for they are
of one basic space.

The ground of being—awareness, awakened mind—is supreme spontaneous presence, empty yet lucid. The ground of being as it manifests constitutes all phenomena of samsara and nirvana—the world of appearances and possibilities—that is, phenomena that manifest within the context of that ground. Arising through the avenue of spontaneous presence, they seem to be better or worse than one another, but since they are of one basic space, without the distinction of better or worse, they are beyond being identical or separate. This is termed “the realm of naturally occurring timeless awareness.” *Cutting Through the Three Times* states:

United as one, everything is the basic space of oneness.
Oneness is without origination—the unborn basic space
of phenomena.

The magical displays that are born within unborn basic space
are thoroughly indeterminate and completely unrestricted.

And *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

Everything contained within the universe of appearances
and possibilities—
such as the kayas, timeless awareness, the positive qualities
of buddhas,
and the bodies and habitual patterns of beings—
is, timelessly, the essence of awakened mind.

The three kayas are shown to be supreme spontaneous presence:

When lights of five colors shine without obstruction
from a crystal,
these lights are perceived as distinct colors, yet none is
better or worse.

They are the dynamic energy of a single crystal sphere.
Self-knowing awareness, the ground of being,³ is similar
to that crystal sphere:

its emptiness is the nature of dharmakaya,
its naturally radiant⁴ lucidity is sambhogakaya,
and its unceasing avenue as the ground for arising is
nirmanakaya.

The three kayas⁵ are spontaneously present in basic space
as the ground of being.

Since a crystal and the lights of five colors shining from it are of one basic space, none is better or worse. By analogy, empty awareness—comparable to the crystal—is dharmakaya. The lucid aspect of awareness—the lights of five colors shining from the crystal—is sambhogakaya. The aspect of an unobstructed avenue for phenomena to arise—corresponding to the capacity of the crystal to emit light (even before it does so)—is nirmanakaya.

Since these three kayas of the ground of being are of the same essence, ultimately none is better or worse. Rupakaya—which arises from that ground, manifesting for those to be tamed—and dharmakaya are neither better nor worse than one another, because they are the magical display of a single awareness—awakened mind and that which manifests as its dynamic energy. *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

I, the all-creating one, am the essence of the three kayas.
I am the essence that is dharmakaya, free of elaboration—
abiding in nonconceptual evenness.
I am sambhogakaya, which fulfills all desires—
the nature that is the magical display of events unfolding.
I am the essence of nirmanakaya—
responsiveness ensuring benefit by taming in whatever way
is necessary.

And *The All-Illuminating Sphere* states:

Totally pure by nature, like a crystal statue,
dharmakaya is flawless, unobstructed, and pristine.
Although the apparent phenomena of earth, water, fire, air,
and space
do in fact manifest with characteristics to a mind that lacks
realization,
they manifest yet are ineffable by nature.
They are evident as the radiance of timeless awareness.
For example, although a rainbow appears clearly in the sky,
it does not exist apart from the sky; it only seems to.

It abides within the context of the sky and, like the sky,
cannot be separated from that.

In the space within which the nature of phenomena
and dharmakaya are inseparable,
the radiance of timeless awareness is naturally arising,
naturally manifest, and naturally lucid.
Ceaselessly evident, it seems to exist apart from that space.
Lucid and nonconceptual, timeless awareness is dharmakaya.
Manifesting naturally in itself, sambhogakaya is timelessly
awakened.

Responsiveness is nirmanakaya, in which dualistic limitations
are totally and innately pure.

Everything is shown to be spontaneous presence, awakened mind:

From that ground, its manifestation arises as apparent
phenomena,
and even as it does there are the three pure kayas, manifesting
naturally to victorious ones,
and all the impure appearances of the universe.
Its very essence is threefold—emptiness, lucidity, and diversity—the display of dharmakaya, sambhogakaya, and nirmanakaya.
These three kayas—the dynamic display of the ground of being
as it manifests—are naturally manifest and spontaneously present, not to be
sought elsewhere.
Having come to thoroughly understand these distinctions,
you should realize that, within the realm of awakened mind,
the phenomena of samsara and nirvana are the spontaneously
present pure realm of the three kayas.

With all phenomena having been shown to be of the nature of the three spontaneously present kayas, as was just explained, the very essence of the spontaneously present ground of being is the single essence of the three kayas. What arises from that context—the apparent phenomena of the universe, whether of samsara or nirvana—is the manifestation of that ground of being, arising as the display of the three kayas. Taken together, these two constitute what is termed “spontaneous presence as the three kayas.”

The pure aspect of the display is threefold: within the dharmakaya aspect of buddhahood, the sambhogakaya aspect arises as the five buddha families, and the nirmanakaya aspect arises in a variety of ways. The impure aspect is the arising of nirmanakaya, sambhogakaya, and dharmakaya as the three avenues of samsara—body, speech, and mind. All of this is of one basic space in spontaneously present emptiness. With nothing better or worse, everything constitutes “the adornment and display of spontaneous presence as basic space.” *Overwhelming the Six Modes of Consciousness with Splendor* states:

The spontaneously present nature of mind is the expanse
of unchanging space.

Its display is indeterminate—the expanse of the magical
expressions of responsiveness.

Everything is the adornment of basic space.

Apart from this, there is no other context in which they cease.

Everything is shown to be awakened mind:

The kayas and timeless awareness of buddhas throughout
the three times,
the body, speech, and mind of beings in the three realms,
karma and afflictive emotions—
of all these phenomena of the world of appearances
and possibilities,
none is anything other than awakened mind.

Although gold has only a single essence, we may take it to be something marvelous when it is fashioned into a statue, or lovely when fashioned into bracelets and other ornaments, or unclean when fashioned into a bedpan. Nonetheless, in essence it remains the same in its basic state as gold. Just as there is no distinction of better or worse with respect to the element gold, regardless of how things appear—as the pure state of buddhas, as the impure state of ordinary beings, as karma and habitual patterns—these states are merely imputed to be separate on the basis of temporary states of mind. Other than that, they are of one basic space—as awakened mind and its dynamic

energy—and there is absolutely no distinction of better or worse within awakened mind. *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

Buddhas, ordinary beings, karma, habitual patterns—
no phenomena are other than awakened mind.

Spontaneous presence is shown to be a universal treasury:

Within the expanse of spontaneous presence is the ground⁶
from which everything comes.

All that manifests as form—the outer environment

and the beings within it—

is enlightened form that is not defined by extremes,
arising as continuous adornment.

Sounds and voices, whether heard as excellent, average,
or inferior,

are enlightened speech that is not defined by extremes,
arising as continuous adornment.

All timeless awareness and ordinary mind, all realization
and lack of realization,

are enlightened mind that is not defined by extremes,
arising as continuous adornment.

Since positive qualities and enlightened activity occur without
being defined by extremes,

the basic space of phenomena is a precious gem that fulfills
all wishes.

Without having to be sought,⁷ everything occurs naturally.

This is “naturally occurring timeless awareness, spontaneously
present.”

The essence of awareness arises timelessly without having to be sought, as do the naturally manifest phenomena of the world of all appearances and possibilities, whether of samsara or nirvana, that manifest within its scope. From the form, speech, mind, qualities, and activity that constitute buddhahood arise the physical, verbal, and mental actions of ordinary beings as naturally manifest, continuous adornment. This is referred to as “precious spontaneous presence, the oneness from which everything comes.” From the supremely pure ground of being, the natural manifestation of that ground is

the expression of its dynamic energy and qualities as the universe, whether of samsara or nirvana, and the beings therein. This occurs in eight ways—six modes of arising and two avenues of expression. *The Heaped Jewels* states:

While it cannot be defined in a determinate way,
spontaneous presence comes about through eight modes
that allow for its arising.

Since its way of manifesting is unceasing,
through the mode of arising that is consistent with
responsiveness

it is a source of refuge for all beings.

Since its manifestation is naturally lucid and unceasing,
it manifests through the illuminating mode of the five lights.

Since the manifest aspect of knowing is unceasing,
through the avenue of pure timeless awareness
its unceasing manifestation arises as the path.

Because its natural manifestation constitutes the totality
of all forms,

it manifests in a manner consistent with the enlightened
embodiment of all phenomena.

Since there is but one essence of consciousness,
it arises in a manner consistent with nonduality.

Since suchness does not abide in any specific place of its own,
as the manifestation of supreme freedom from limitations
it manifests within the ground of being, which is indeterminate
and spontaneously present.

Because unobstructed awareness is perfect in its oneness,
through the avenue of purity—timeless awareness itself—
it is connected with the very essence of being itself.

Because its mode of occurrence is unceasing,
it arises from this aspect of pervasive manifestation
in a manner consistent with the avenue of impurity—samsara—
as the source of ordinary beings.

All of this manifests through the eight modes that allow for
its arising.

Since this arises naturally through the modes by which things
come about,
“spontaneously present appearances” manifest just like
precious jewels.

Spontaneous presence is shown to entail no effort or achievement:

The spontaneously present ground of myriad phenomena is awakened mind, which is always spontaneously present, so the three kayas, unsought, are innately present as natural qualities.

Since effort—which creates causes and effects, whether positive or negative—is unnecessary,

immerse yourself in genuine being,⁸ resting naturally with nothing needing to be done.

The expanse of spontaneous presence entails no deliberate effort, no acceptance or rejection.

From now on make no effort, since phenomena already are what they are.

Since positive qualities are timelessly ensured in the essence of awareness, from now on no effort is necessary. And since there are no causes or effects, whether positive or negative, these qualities do not rely on deliberate renunciation or acceptance. If they were created, they would never be ensured, and naturally occurring timeless awareness would be negated, so you should gain realization in the supreme state of natural rest in which phenomena are resolved. *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

Since there is no relying on the past,
nothing is accomplished through causes and no result
is posited.

Involving no such presumption, enlightened intent is
spontaneously present by nature.

Nothing need be done about what has always been so.

Since things are immutable just as they are,
there is no need to accomplish what simply is.

Because all phenomena are spontaneously present by nature,
buddhas of the three times, for whom this is ensured,
do not bestow teachings that encourage effort and achievement.

If one seeks, whatever is sought will not be accomplished by
meditative absorption.

That absorption will be a terrible malady.

The same source continues:

I, the all-creating one, am already so, timelessly,
and thus would not indicate to anyone that anything remains
to be done.

My retinue would be afflicted with the malady of effort.
This would lead to the flaw of negating naturally occurring
timeless awareness.

It would lead to the flaw of trying to improve upon suchness
itself.

Since what is false would compromise and distort what is true,
the fact that nothing need be done is not achieved by efforts
to the contrary.

The fact that nothing need be done is shown to be spontaneous presence:

Even the enlightenment of all victorious ones of the three times
is spontaneously present as a supremely blissful state of natural
rest.

So, without depending on⁹ teachings of causality that are for less
fortunate ones,

look to the nature that is like space, in which nothing need
be done.

Awareness—ultimate buddhahood, supreme spontaneous presence—is natural rest, perceived in its natural place without compromise or distortion. It is not otherwise brought about by effort or achievement. *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

Buddhas of previous generations, moreover,
had nothing to contrive or seek out, only their own minds.
They did not contrive what simply is.

They did not cultivate meditative absorption that entailed
concepts.

Accomplishment came about through nonconceptual
mind itself.

For those who abide now or have yet to appear,
accomplishment also comes about through nonconceptual
evenness.

All teachings based on causality are transmitted in order to guide those of lesser fortune, who are spiritually immature, and so apply to small-minded people with incorrect views. They do not apply to those with good fortune who are thoroughly immersed in genuine being. This is because one cannot expect to awaken to buddhahood by accepting or rejecting causality, just as one cannot expect to make wood a gem by polishing it. *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

Therefore, great perfection beyond causality
is not within the reach of those who lack good fortune,
so they should avail themselves of teachings on causality.

The same source continues:

Even if people with little good fortune and no suitable karma
were taught explicitly and without reservation, they would not
gain realization.

They would instead be poisoned by struggling with causality.
Those who desire a precious gem will not obtain it by polishing
wood.

Likewise, fortunate people with suitable karma who are
thoroughly immersed in genuine being
have no view, samaya, activity, postmeditation techniques,
deliberate motivation, meditation and practice based
on causality, or antidotes.

To perceive that the ultimate and the relative are not a duality
is to perceive the suchness of mind,
and this is a vital necessity to such people.

Since there always has been spontaneous presence, it is shown that there is no need at this point to make it so:

Given what is, there is no need to create anything further.
So, in supreme spontaneous presence, uncontrived as it has
always been,
cut through all occurrence of and involvement with the hope
and fear of ordinary mind
and gain knowledge in basic space, spontaneous presence that
need not be sought.

With the sun as a given, its radiance need not be purposely created. Similarly, with awareness as a given, it is already ensured as dharmakaya, and so need not be accomplished after the fact through effort. *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

Without deliberately settling, without thinking, and without
requiring anything,
abide naturally in nonconceptual evenness.
Since this has always been so, the mind of effort does not pertain.
Any abiding in that supreme bliss
constitutes the heart essence of all phenomena.

Spontaneous presence is summarized as the heart essence of the three kayas, beyond hope and fear:

All phenomena, however they manifest,
are the display of dharmakaya, sambhogakaya,
and nirmanakaya—
the three uncontrived aspects of essence, nature,
and responsiveness.
Samsara and nirvana are the three kayas, the expanse
of awakened mind,
spontaneously present in uncontrived supreme evenness,
and so samsara is not to be renounced, nor is nirvana
to be achieved.
With the pacification of all value judgments, there is abiding
in the ultimate heart essence.
This reveals all phenomena within the key point,
the realm of awakened mind, timelessly and spontaneously
present.

All phenomena of the world of appearances and possibilities, whether of samsara or nirvana, abide in supreme spontaneous presence as the natural radiance of the three kayas—essence as emptiness, nature as lucidity, and responsiveness as the arising of their myriad display. Since these three aspects of awareness (essence, nature, and responsiveness) abide as the three spontaneously present kayas that constitute the ground of being, samsara has never existed as something to be renounced, for it does not exist as something self-defining.

Nor has nirvana ever existed as something to be acquired, for it does not exist as something to be sought elsewhere. The equalness of samsara and nirvana in light of awareness is revealed as the key point of all phenomena within spontaneous presence as ultimate enlightened intent. *The Reverberation of Sound* states:

There is threefold abiding as the original state—
essence, nature, and responsiveness.

And *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

The nature of me, all-creating enlightenment,
is unsought, naturally and spontaneously present.
The heart essence of all victorious ones is the three kayas.
My uncontrived nature is ensured as dharmakaya,
my uncontrived essence as sambhogakaya,
and my fully evident responsiveness as nirmanakaya.
I do not reveal these three to be results accomplished
by being sought.

To speak of “nature as emptiness and essence as lucidity” is to make a distinction between what is fundamentally unconditioned and its heart essence, whereas to speak of “essence as emptiness and nature as lucidity” is to make a distinction that demonstrates basic space and the heart essence of that space. However, the ultimate meaning of these is the same—emptiness is dharmakaya, lucidity is sambhogakaya, and the mode of arising is nirmanakaya.

Discerning the Implications

Now, the implications of spontaneous presence can be discerned. One implication that can be discerned is that the way in which phenomena occur reveals natural mind:

**Phenomena are discerned within the context of
spontaneous presence.**

**The five great elements and all apparent phenomena
of the universe
arise timelessly as the expression of nonconceptual
spontaneous presence.**

Involving no concept of self or other and pure in their natural vividness,
they are discerned within the context of natural mind,
free of deliberate effort.

Do not suppress objects that manifest.¹⁰

Rest¹¹ with the six modes of consciousness relaxed.

Within the scope of awareness—naturally occurring timeless awareness, a supreme state of original purity that is empty yet lucid like a crystal globe—the five great elements constitute the inner aspect of lucidity, the spontaneous presence of the five aspects of illumination that occur naturally. Things arise from this as the outer aspect of lucidity through the body's five inner aspects of illumination, just as outward radiance manifests from the potential for illumination found within a crystal. It is this radiance that is initially misconstrued as having identity, and so, out of confusion, the dregs of the five elements are perceived to be the universe. When this confusion occurs, the radiance of the five great elements—as natural dynamic energy—manifests in an impure way. Once this is understood, the five elements of earth, water, fire, air, and space abide within their own context in a naturally vivid manner, without being thought of as self or other. By analogy, self-knowing awareness is unencumbered by discursive thoughts. It is unconstrained in that it lacks true existence and—within the scope of things appearing without being conceptualized—rests, naturally lucid, without reifying appearances based on confusion.

Similarly, even as the lights and spheres that are outward reflections manifest as direct experience, one rests unencumbered and unconstrained in natural lucidity without concepts. Thus, one is referred to as “someone who is immersed in genuine being, resting in enlightened intent,” in which the “teachers”—the five elements that are the very essence of apparent phenomena—reveal the five principles of nonconceptual evenness. *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

Awakened mind, the universal cause,
accounts for the five great elements that are the essence
of mind—
the five bodhisattva teachers.
Theirs is the sambhogakaya embodiment;
the teaching is elucidated by virtue of its own essence;

these teachers reveal the nature of self-knowing awareness.
 As enlightened intent itself,
 these sambhogakaya teachers do not conceive of themselves
 in any way,
 nor do they create concepts about something “other”—
 phenomena as sense objects.

The five bodhisattva teachers
 all reveal the nature of phenomena in this way.
 The timeless awareness of awakened mind
 occurs naturally as the embodiment of these teachers,
 so words and letters are not revealed.

Revealing the nature of self-knowing awareness
 involves no concept of self, no concept of other,
 but rather reveals the enlightened intent of nonconceptual
 evenness.

By realizing this, all ordinary beings of the three realms become
 equal to all buddhas.

The nature of phenomena that they seek is attained unsought.

In the same section, this source also describes the situations that apply to water, fire, air, and space.

Another implication that can be discerned is that sensory consciousness, devoid of concepts, is empty:

Awareness, the origin of everything, is spontaneously present
 with a lucid radiance.¹²

One implication of the five senses being uncontrived,
 without the coming and going of thoughts,¹³
 is that spontaneous presence as enlightened intent is dharmakaya,
 the simultaneity of awareness and emptiness.
 Recognize this, be decisive, and rest free of elaboration.

When the five kinds of sense objects manifest outwardly, one rests inwardly in the lucidity of naturally unsullied awareness, without becoming lost in the immediacy of the perceptions of sensory consciousness. This is the key point for purifying sensory consciousness in light of its emptiness and lucidity. *The Great Garuda* states:

The implications of the vast expanse, in which nothing need
be done, unsought and supreme,
can be discerned, without action or speech, within the “interval”
between form and emptiness.

And *The Six Expanses* states:

In the nature of mind, free of ordinary mental processes,
profound insight that entails no deliberation
is revealed by me, Samantabhadra,
to be enlightened intent, the resolution of coming and going.

The supreme state of natural meditative stability is one of the implications that can be discerned:

In the pure vast expanse of self-knowing awareness,
free of restriction,
one implication of the uninterrupted evenness of everything
that manifests, whether objects or mind,
can be discerned within the “interval” of spontaneous presence—
natural meditative stability.

At all times, like the course of a great river,
timeless awareness—not cultivated in meditation,
but spontaneously present—is uninterrupted.

The heart essence of all phenomena, the primordial expanse
that occurs naturally,
reaches full measure as ultimate enlightened intent,
wholly positive.

Everyone refers to what is called “no meditation, no distraction,” but this is just a tightly controlled state of mind. Here what I mean by “the ongoing flow of meditative stability not cultivated in meditation” is as follows: When any sense object manifests and awareness arises without restriction, one recognizes this without suppressing the object and settles into utter relaxation. With this, there is a continuous equilibrium in openness that is uninterrupted and free of restrictions, naturally pristine, and empty yet lucid. It is unborn yet arises ceaselessly, is free within that unborn expanse, and so constitutes a naturally pristine and ongoing flow of meditative stability. *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

Although everyone speaks of mind itself being unborn and everyone embraces the idea that it is ineffable by nature, no one actually realizes that it is unborn.

Therefore, do not engage in any effort:
merely understand this transmission of the all-creating monarch and abide without distraction in its meaning.

Do not train the mind with corrective measures.

Do not fixate on objects. Do not try to concentrate.

That in itself is the ultimate point, however things occur,
so engage in that ultimate meaning of me, the all-creating one.

And *The Six Expanses* states:

In the nature of mind, which has nothing to do with acceptance or rejection,
the manifestation of natural freedom, without extremes,
is revealed by me, Samantabhadra,
to be supremely pervasive enlightened intent.

Another implication that can be discerned is that spontaneous presence is a supreme state of imperturbable rest:

The source of phenomena is awakened mind;
awakened mind is similar to space, the universal metaphor.
Everything is contained within the expanse of space and is pure
by nature,
without this entailing effort or achievement.
Similarly, all outer and inner phenomena, being spontaneously
present,
are discerned within the context of the supreme state
of imperturbable rest in the face of whatever manifests,
which is beyond all objects of the imagination and does not
require that anything be done.

Just as the universe is contained within space, samsara and nirvana are totally contained within the essence of awareness. So, regardless of what manifests, consciousness of its arising is allowed to rest imperturbably in its natural place, ensuring freedom from thought and expression based upon concepts. *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

Whatever it seems there is to be done, whatever manifests,
 freedom is revealed
 by resting naturally without deliberation in the nature
 of phenomena.

And *The Reverberation of Sound* states:

Given the confusion of the impure state of being,
 the key point is to rest imperturbably
 without manipulating the avenues of the sense faculties.
 Not to deviate from this¹⁴ is the pith instruction.
 Things appear without being reified as objects,
 while mind arises without being reified as a subject.
 The eyes see without analyzing.
 One is led along the path of ineffability—the nature
 of phenomena.
 One is brought to the ground of being that has nothing
 to do with view or meditation.
 One merges with the effortless fruition in which nothing
 need be done.
 In this, one does not dwell in the limitations of apparent
 phenomena.

And *The Six Expanses* states:

In the nature of mind, free of anxiety,
 the experience beyond hope and fear
 is revealed by me, Samantabhadra,
 to be enlightened intent, resting timelessly with indwelling
 confidence.

Another implication that can be discerned is that spontaneous presence is free of deliberate effort:

Completely encompassing the enlightened intent of victorious
 ones just as it is—
 not coming into being or ceasing, not coming or going,
 and so forth—

spontaneous presence is pure and unwavering meditative absorption.

All phenomena are discerned within the context of nothing needing to be done.

Since phenomena are not deliberately produced, they do not waver from the ground of being, their natural place of rest. Since they are spontaneously present within the enlightened intent of victorious ones, one rests—without moving, speaking, or thinking—in a state of equilibrium within supreme spontaneous presence, a wide-open clarity similar to the immensity of space. *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

Enlightenment, the nature of phenomena in which there is no acceptance or rejection,
 abides like space, and so cannot be contrived with body or mind.
 There is no fixation on ideas, so it cannot be cultivated
 in meditation.
 Utterly peaceful like space, free of all impurity,
 and involving no objects, enlightened intent is beyond
 any construct.

And *The Six Expanses* states:

In the nonconceptual nature of mind
 things appear naturally and ceaselessly, without being reified,
 and so are recognized as the realm of lucid, self-knowing
 awareness.

In the nature of mind, which entails no deliberation,
 the manifestation of naturally abiding and spontaneous vastness
 is revealed by me, Samantabhadra,
 to be enlightened intent, the natural reversal of the four sounds.

In the nature of mind, which entails no focusing of attention,
 what would cause it to stir manifests as naturally pure.

This is revealed by me, Samantabhadra,
 to be meditative stability as the natural freedom that underlies
 reification.

In the nature of mind, free of ordinary mental processes,
 profound insight that entails no deliberation
 is revealed by me, Samantabhadra,
 to be enlightened intent, the resolution of coming and going.

Embracing the Larger Scope

Now, all phenomena are timelessly embraced within supreme spontaneous presence. First, everything is embraced within the purity of spontaneous presence:

**All phenomena are embraced within the larger scope
of spontaneous presence.**

**The entire world of appearances and possibilities is naturally
manifest¹⁵ and spontaneously present,
all samsara and nirvana is spontaneously present as the display,¹⁶
and awakened mind is timelessly and spontaneously present,
so all phenomena are nothing other than spontaneous presence.**

That is to say, the entire universe of appearances and possibilities is spontaneously present as the natural manifestation of mind, just as the naturally manifest appearances of the dream state are spontaneously present. All phenomena of samsara and nirvana arise spontaneously as the display that comes from the dynamic energy of awareness, just as lights of five colors shine from a crystal. And awareness—awakened mind—is timelessly and spontaneously present as supreme original purity, empty yet lucid. This is said to be “like space.” *Cutting Through the Three Times* states:

The ground of all samsara and nirvana is awakened mind.
The ground of awakened mind is spontaneously present.
The essence of spontaneous presence is indeterminate.
What is meaningful about spontaneous presence is that
it is unborn,
so unborn spontaneous presence is free of any time frame
with a beginning or end.

The essence of all samsara and nirvana is awakened mind.
The essence of awakened mind arises indeterminately.
The indeterminate ground is spontaneously present.
What is meaningful about this indeterminacy is that it is unborn,
so what is unborn is indeterminate and free of any time frame
with a beginning or end.

The ultimate meaning of all samsara and nirvana is awakened
mind.

What is meaningful about awakened mind is that it is unborn.

Its unborn nature is spontaneously present.

The unborn essence is indeterminate.

What is meaningful about what is unborn is that it does not come into existence,

so the unborn, since it has never come into existence, is free of any time frame with a beginning or end.

What truly characterizes all samsara and nirvana is awakened mind.

What truly characterizes awakened mind is that it is without beginning or end.

The beginningless and endless ground is spontaneously present.

The beginningless and endless essence is indeterminate.

What is meaningful about what is beginningless and endless is that it is unborn,

so the very epitome of this does not abide in any specific way and is free of any time frame with a beginning or end.

The way of abiding, beginningless and endless, cannot be achieved,

so the way things arise, also without beginning or end, cannot be stopped.

The way things are, beginningless and endless, cannot be labeled,

so the way they are freed, also without beginning or end, is uninterrupted.

The uninterrupted nature of phenomena is the expanse of evenness,

so everything abides by its very nature within the expanse of evenness.

In spontaneously present awareness, that spontaneous presence is shown to be naturally manifest in three ways, for it can be characterized in three ways—as ground, essence, and ultimate meaningfulness.

Spontaneous presence is revealed within the larger scope of its not entailing effort or achievement:

Because the nature of mind is spontaneously present, the fundamental ground, the heart essence, is encompassed within awakened mind.

Unsought through the ten attributes, it is spontaneously present,
so there is no need to try¹⁷ to develop view, meditation,
or meditative absorption,
no need to accomplish anything else through the usual process
of causality,
no need for the turmoil of hope and fear to arise.
The immediacy of spontaneous presence truly is primordial
dharmakaya.

Since dharmakaya is timelessly ensured in the essence of awareness, without ever uniting with and then separating from it, there is no point in trying to accomplish this anew through view, meditation, conduct, and fruition that entail striving based on hope and fear, or through the stages of development and completion, activity, and so forth. In this regard, it is shown that there is nothing to be sought through the ten attributes. *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

Ah! The teacher of teachers, the all-creating monarch,
bestows transmission on the retinue—uncontrived mind.
You who are immersed in genuine being, who realize that
everything without exception is unborn,
do not strive within the context of the ten attributes.
In the nature of all-creating awakened mind,
knowing is not a knowing of object and subject, so there is
nothing to be rejected.
With mastery that comes through realization and abiding
in the meaning,
there is spontaneous presence in the enlightened intent
of the all-creating monarch.

The same source points out that none of this bears any similarity to the process of deliberate involvement with causality:

The view and conduct of the Great Perfection
are unlike anything accomplished through causality.
The view and conduct of awakened mind are by nature
like space,
and space transcends conceptual analysis.
For those who engage in conceptual analysis,
enlightenment, which is like space, will not come about.

Spontaneous presence is summarized as being unchanging:

In the vast expanse of the nature of mind, the unchanging realm of space,
 although samsara and nirvana arise naturally from the expanse of the three kayas,
 they never waver from the expanse¹⁸ of the three kayas.
 The display is indeterminate—a treasury of the magical expression of responsiveness.
 Since everything arises as a single state of wholly positive spontaneous presence,
 there is mastery over samsara and nirvana, for nothing wavers in the slightest from basic space.
 Since everything is wholly positive—there is nothing that is not positive—
 the basic space of the vajra heart essence is the spontaneous presence of everything.
 All phenomena are forever embraced within the larger scope of spontaneous presence.

All phenomena of the world of appearances and possibilities, whether of samsara or nirvana, are such that they do not waver from the scope of awareness—the three kayas as a supreme state of spontaneous presence. This is referred to as “the spontaneously present basic space of me, Samantabhadra, in which nothing need be done.” *Overwhelming the Six Modes of Consciousness with Splendor* states:

Outwardly and inwardly things dwindle and multiply—the dynamic energy of awakened mind.
 This is nothing whatsoever in itself,¹⁹ but manifests as anything whatsoever,
 and so is marvelous, superb, free of anything needing to be done.
 Since there is mastery over samsara, nirvana, and all spiritual approaches,
 the oneness in which nothing need be done overwhelms everything with its splendor.
 There is nothing anywhere that could constitute a limitation.
 There is nowhere to stray from the single expanse in which nothing need be done.

Within the very realm of Samantabhadra, free of anything
needing to be done,
samsara is wholly positive, nirvana is positive;
there is never any samsara or nirvana in the expanse
of Samantabhadra.

Apparent phenomena are wholly positive, emptiness is positive
in every way;
there is never any appearance or emptiness in the expanse
of Samantabhadra.

Birth and death are wholly positive, happiness and suffering
are positive in every way;
there is no birth or death, no happiness or suffering,
in the expanse of Samantabhadra.

Self and other are wholly positive, affirmation and denial
are positive in every way;
there is no self or other, no affirmation or denial, in the expanse
of Samantabhadra.

Labeling occurs out of confusion, since what is ineffable
is perceived to exist.

Since everything arises as the single state of spontaneous
presence, Samantabhadra,
all limitations without exception are overwhelmed
with splendor.

Since all limitations without exception are one within
basic space,

this unparalleled oneness is the greatest of the great.

The greatest of the great is the basic space of phenomena,
Samantabhadra.

Like a monarch, it overwhelms everything with its splendor,
exerting mastery over all samsara and nirvana,
without vacillating in the slightest.

With everything wholly positive, even what seems not to be
positive is positive.

Without the distinction of positive or negative, there is oneness in
the wholly positive.

The wholly positive expanse is the scope of awareness—original purity, timeless awareness that occurs naturally and is empty yet lucid. Within this, even as such things as birth and death, happiness and suf-

fering, manifest, there are ways in which they arise, but nothing in the least has ever existed that undergoes birth or death, or causes happiness or suffering. Because these constitute the context and display of a single awareness, and because that awareness is not subject to birth or death, happiness or suffering, regardless of how things appear, their essence likewise has never existed. These are the manifest aspect of the nature of phenomena, originally pure and free of anything needing to be done.

For this reason, since samsara, even as it manifests, does not exist, it is not something to be rejected; since nirvana, even as it manifests, does not exist, it is not something to be achieved. Since what is fundamentally unconditioned, like space, entails no deliberate effort, the key point of all this is to abide without doing anything, resting in a state of equilibrium as ordinary consciousness falls away in the resolution of phenomena.

Since there is no karma in the essence of awareness, the limitations of positive and negative action are transcended. If there were karma, this would entail the flaw of there being no naturally occurring timeless awareness. *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

The label “karma” is applied to any specific pattern
of correspondence.

What does this imply?

If karma held mastery, there would be no naturally occurring
timeless awareness.

You might object, “We know that there is karma because it manifests as suffering,” but although this manifestation occurs because of the way in which the display of awakened mind arises yet is unborn, it does not exist in naturally occurring timeless awareness. Similarly, although gathering clouds appear, they are merely the display or dynamic energy of space; in the essence of space they do not exist. The same source states:

The suffering of beings is awakened mind.

The fullness of its display is due to its consummate nature.

Since there is no avoiding this, abide in evenness, which is like
limitless space.

Coming to the Decisive Experience

Now, in coming to the decisive experience of all phenomena as spontaneously present, first one comes to a decisive experience of spontaneous presence as inexpressible and beyond imagination:

The decisive experience is, by its nature, that of spontaneous presence.

Within that spontaneous presence, which has no specific nature and cannot be divided into outer or inner, all phenomena manifest naturally, are neither confirmed nor refuted, neither come nor go.

The infinite expanse has no division into above or below.

It is thoroughly indeterminate and completely unrestricted.

It cannot be characterized as some “thing,” for it is inexpressible and beyond imagining.

Awareness—awakened mind—is not to be confirmed or refuted, is without transition or change, and cannot be divided into outer or inner, above or below. So, regardless of what manifests, what arises, it constitutes basic space that is in essence beyond imagination and expression. *The Direct Encounter with the Three Kayas* states:

Awakened mind is the all-inclusive source.

Awakened mind is nondual, since it is not made and then unmade.

The basic space of phenomena is evenness, since there is no self or other.

Awakened mind is innate responsiveness, expressing itself impartially in all ways.

Awakened mind is enlightened activity, bringing consummate benefit to beings.

The basic space of phenomena is unborn, since it undergoes no transition or change.

Within the basic space of phenomena, regardless of what arises, whether high or low,

awakened mind is never subject to hierarchy.

Within the basic space of phenomena, regardless of what arises, whether outwardly or inwardly,

there is never a division into outer and inner within the expanse
in which nothing need be done.

With no division into outer and inner, the nature of phenomena
is an unobstructed expanse.

Within the context of indivisibility, all conduct is the direct
encounter.

And *The All-Illuminating Sphere* states:

The ultimate meaning of that which is unceasing and ineffable
by nature—
in looking one does not see it, and in seeking one does not find it.
Outwardly and inwardly, or even on the outward level alone,
there is no object to be conceptualized on even the most minute
or profound level.

One comes to a decisive experience of spontaneous presence as the ultimate heart essence:

Because phenomena are originally pure in essence
and spontaneously present by their very nature,
they are free of the limitations of the four alternatives²⁰—
existence, nonexistence, affirmation, or denial.
This is the nature of nondual awakened mind.

Given that all phenomena are encompassed within awareness, that awareness—awakened mind—is beyond the extreme of being affirmed as something permanent, since it is empty in essence. It is beyond the limitation of being denied to be anything, since it is lucid by nature. Beyond the confines of the four limitations—those of being existent, nonexistent, both, or neither—timeless spontaneous presence is referred to as “original purity as the source, with nothing to be confirmed or refuted, and without transition or change.” *The Reverberation of Sound* states:

Thus, since everything is the nature of phenomena,
there is nothing whatsoever to be accepted,
nor is there the slightest thing to be rejected.
The nature of phenomena is completely ineffable.

And *The Perfect Dynamic Energy of the Lion* states:

Buddhahood, free of the four limitations, is self-knowing awareness itself;
dharmakaya is beyond existence or nonexistence, affirmation or denial.

And *The Six Expanses* states:

The essence itself is originally pure;
the nature is spontaneously present.

The meaning of the preceding section is shown more extensively:

Original purity in its essence has never existed as anything;
rather, its nature, like that of space, is primordially pure.
Spontaneous presence in its essence has not been created
by anyone;
rather, its mode of arising is unceasing, so that anything
whatsoever can manifest.
The origin of all samsara and nirvana is atemporal,
with no beginning or end.

The very essence of awareness—original purity—is beyond the limitation of existence or nonexistence, and so is beyond being imagined or expressed in any way whatsoever. *The Six Expanses* states:

Free of elaboration, the originally pure nature of phenomena
is the quintessential ground of being, totally pure in its
very essence.

It transcends words and syllables.
No definitive conclusion can be reached through description.
It is free of all attempts to represent or elaborate on it.
There are no dualistic thoughts.
There are no buddhas, no ordinary beings,
no phenomena, or any ideas about phenomena.
There is nothing, there is nothing, there is nothing whatsoever.

The nature of awareness is timelessly and spontaneously present as the ground for the arising of all samsara and nirvana. Its very essence

has never existed as either samsara or nirvana, yet its dynamic energy and display do arise in any way whatsoever. *The Tantra of the Supreme Beauty of Auspiciousness* states:

Ah! Although there is no confusion in me, it is my dynamic energy that gives rise to confusion. From the unchanging ground of being, the nature arises ceaselessly and naturally; nonrecognition of awareness occurs because innate responsiveness is not ascertained. To give an example, clouds do not really exist in the sky, for they occur adventitiously. Similarly, nonrecognition of awareness does not exist as something within the ground of being, yet that nonrecognition occurs naturally due to the mode of arising that is consistent with responsiveness. There is what is called "the way of abiding that is the spontaneously present ground of being." This, moreover, abides as an indeterminate manifestation. Furthermore, what is called the "the way of abiding of the precious locket" arises in eight ways; it is an unceasing avenue for sensory experience.

From this, apparent phenomena arise as samsara or nirvana. While samsara arises through the avenue of impurity and nirvana through that of purity, although they manifest as such within the scope of the very essence of awareness, that awareness does not vacillate or change. *Overwhelming the Six Modes of Consciousness with Splendor* states:

Although samsara and nirvana arise naturally from the expanse
of the three kayas,
they never waver from the basic space of the three kayas.

One comes to a decisive experience of the spontaneous presence of all that occurs:

Spontaneous presence, unborn and indeterminate, is the ultimate
ground of being.
The way things arise, without beginning or end, cannot be
suppressed.
The way things are, without beginning or end, has no frame
of reference.

The way things are freed, ineffable by nature, is uninterrupted.
Following the point at which things arise, one comes to a decisive experience.

This is known as “dissolution into dharmakaya—resolution within the ground of being as basic space.”

All phenomena arise initially from the unceasing expanse of spontaneously present awareness. Thereafter, they continue to manifest in light of awareness. Finally, they are freed, vanishing within the expanse of awareness—awakened mind—as unchanging spontaneous presence. Since there is no deviation from this process, “their departure is guaranteed,” so to speak; they converge within the single sphere of dharmakaya without edges or corners. *Cutting Through the Three Times*, by the great master Garab Dorjé, states:

The ground of being, without beginning or end,
is spontaneously present.

The way things arise, without beginning or end,
cannot be suppressed.

The way things are, without beginning or end,
has no specific frame of reference.

The way things are freed, without beginning or end,
is uninterrupted.

Without interruption, the nature of phenomena is the
expanse of evenness.

Everything abides naturally within the expanse²¹ of evenness.

In the single nature of phenomena, there is no question
of whether or not there is evenness.

Because the realm of evenness is uninterrupted,
ongoing ultimate truth, without extremes, is the fortress
of the sky above.

Since the four limitations are negated in the single state
of spontaneous presence,
infinite extension without extremes is the fortress
of the earth below.²²

Owing to the connection between the directions—above,
below, and every point in between—
victorious ones speak of the “fortress of blending these
in the open space between.”

Unbiased and all-accommodating view is termed “fortress,”

the bastion of awareness—awakened mind—
 is termed “stronghold,”
 the expanse of the unborn basic space of phenomena
 is termed “domain,”
 naturally occurring timeless awareness, surpassing ordinary
 experience, is termed “entitlement,”
 and the razor’s edge of what is indeterminate and naturally
 arising is termed “weapon.”
 The whirling blade of spontaneous presence, equal in all
 circumstances,
 cuts completely through the limitations of making things
 determinate,
 so the sphere without edges or corners is all-embracing.
 There is freedom within the expanse that cannot be sought
 and is indivisible.

Thus, in the context of spontaneous presence arising equally in all circumstances, maintain your experience of its naturally manifest quality without making distinctions. So, when you become free of the confines of the physical body at death, the outer and inner display of confusion dissolves into its “mother” aspect, the nature of phenomena. When you perceive spontaneous presence in light of the ground of being as it manifests, there is natural freedom, for you reach a turning point through the instructions on recognizing this as manifesting naturally. The victory of the razor-sharp weapon of instructions for recognizing what is the very essence and of the whirling blade of the natural manifestation of spontaneous presence brings freedom in original basic space. This is referred to as “convergence within the unique sphere, dharmakaya.”

One comes to a decisive experience of the ultimate meaning of this process of dissolution:

Just as²³ clouds occurring in the sky dissolve therein
 and the light from a crystal disappears into the crystal,
 so all of samsara and nirvana—the manifestation of the ground
 of being that arises from that ground—
 holds to its own place of original purity within²⁴ the essence,
 the ground of being.

The supreme decisive experience concerning all phenomena
is that they are encompassed within basic space—spontaneous
presence as the natural place of rest.

All elaborations dissolve naturally in the nonconceptual
expanse.

Fundamentally, dynamic energy arises ceaselessly from spontaneous presence, so that what manifests in the moment as the confusion of samsara arises through the avenues of the senses as the complex universe of dualistic perceptions. One comes to a decision about this through view, maintains the continuity of this view through meditation, dispels constraints through conduct, and, as the fruition, abandons hope and fear. Thus, when one immersed in genuine being becomes free of the confines of the physical body, dualistic perceptions that manifest as confusion dissipate in and of themselves. When, over a period of five “days” following death, the manifest realm of nirvana arises as the kayas and timeless awareness, it is recognized for what it is, so that this manifest realm of spontaneous presence dissolves into the essence and there is freedom in primordial being. That which formerly manifested as the confusion of samsara ceases like a cloud vanishing in the sky, while the manifest realm of nirvana dissolves like light from a crystal disappearing back into it. Just as discursive thoughts are freed in their emptiness, thought patterns—the contents of ordinary mind—fade. There is awakening to buddhahood in the original ground of being. That is to say, although dharmakaya (as the essence of awareness) and rupakaya (as its natural radiance) are spontaneously present, the bonds of the physical body make it impossible for them to manifest. When one is free of this physical body, they manifest and hold to their own place in original purity. *The Perfect Dynamic Energy of the Lion* states:

In the bodies of all ordinary beings
abides the pure vision of timeless awareness,
but it cannot manifest on a grand scale.

For example, that which is within the confines of a womb
or an egg
is not evident, but obscured.
Once its own energy is perfected, however, it emerges.

Similarly, as soon as this body born of discursive thought
 has been cast aside,
 one encounters the realm of naturally manifest appearances.
 Self-knowing awareness, abiding timelessly,
 perceives the essence nonconceptually.
 The pure vision of timeless awareness
 and the truth of buddhahood are perceived.

However samsara and nirvana manifest in their respective ways in light of awareness, by their very nature they are equal. In particular, consider the way in which they arise. Both the naturally manifest appearances of samsara (the myriad variety of the universe that manifests at present) and the manifestations of nirvana (the kayas and timeless awareness that manifest in the intermediate state after death) are empty appearances, equal in that they arise from basic space and are freed in basic space. This is how you should understand “the equalness of samsara and nirvana.”

The nature of two decisive experiences is shown:

With the dissolution of the six modes of consciousness within
 their natural place of rest, dharmakaya,
 whatever appears at present—all that manifests as objects—
 is a single evenness outwardly and inwardly, experienced
 decisively within the basic space of spontaneous presence.
 One comes to the ultimate decisive experience of everything—
 whether of samsara or nirvana, whether naturally manifest
 or even nonmanifest—
 within the fully awakened state of enlightenment.
 In the same way, one comes to the moment-by-moment decisive
 experience of what is innately pristine,²⁵ empty yet lucid,
 by letting the busyness of apparent phenomena and mind²⁶
 rest naturally in the lucid expanse,
 so that there is utter relaxation, nonconceptual and free
 of elaboration.
 This is “abiding firmly within the precious enclosure.”

Since one comes to the decisive experience of everything as precious spontaneous presence, even as things appear moment by mo-

ment to the five senses and to discursive mind as the sixth "sense," one rests without contriving or distorting, complicating or simplifying them. Thus, awareness, empty yet lucid, like space in being without limit or center, is completely awakened as unobstructed lucidity and purity. Since it is inseparably linked with the space of spontaneous presence—the profound lucidity of dharmakaya—and no longer hindered by anything corporeal, it blends with that precious spontaneous presence. This is similar to the space within a room merging with the vast space outside when a door is opened. Resting with the eyes open and alert, like an open door, one merges with awareness that is open and alert. When one becomes free of the physical body, three factors blend inseparably in a single spontaneous presence; this is similar to the three aspects of outer, inner, and intermediate space blending as one when a house is torn down.

Those of the very highest acumen become free in this, awakening to buddhahood in an unobstructed ascent, without any intermediate state after death. This is the consummate method of freedom in spontaneous presence. As *The All-Illuminating Sphere* states:

For those of the very highest acumen,
 what is supreme in always being unobstructed
 entails no intermediate state, not even for an instant,
 but is rather an abiding moment by moment.
 The essence, the pure nature of phenomena,
 abides in the space of natural purity.
 Awareness arises without obstruction;
 this is not in fact an arising, but an abiding.
 For example, in unobstructed space,
 artificial boundaries are imposed by the construction
 of a building,
 the space within the building divided from naturally pure space.
 Undifferentiated through an open doorway,
 these two "spaces" are clearly without separation.
 In being connected by the doorway of timeless awareness,
 the two aspects—awareness as it is hemmed in
 by habitual patterns
 and awareness as it abides in space—
 abide in supreme and unobstructed nonduality

when the physical body that results from habitual patterns
has been removed as a hindrance.

If one experiences the supreme meaning of such understanding,
then just as a lion bounds over the earth with its leap,
supreme and unobstructed timeless awareness
breaks through to the precious enclosure,
without some intermediate state beginning and then ending.
Thus, there is abiding in supreme timeless freedom.

The spontaneously present "mother" aspect of utter lucidity is the ground aspect of awareness, which is empty yet lucid and unborn; the naturally occurring "child" aspect of utter lucidity is naturally unsullied, unborn, and empty. These two aspects, intimately linked though distinguished as lucidity and subtle limpidness, blend as one at the point of separation from the physical body. However, they are not in fact different "awarenesses" for, given that the mother aspect holds to its own place in the natural state of rest, it is only a matter of whether or not there has been separation from the confines of the physical body. The "doorway of timeless awareness" opens through awareness that elicits a subtle and pristine quality. The metaphor is that of a reunion between mother and child.

The decisive experience is pith instruction in its ultimate sense:

If you do not come to a decisive experience now in basic space,
the natural place of rest,
freedom in the original ground of being will not come about
in the future.

Rigid meditative stability, with no freedom in the ground
of being as basic space,
affords no chance to attain liberation, only rebirth as a god
in a higher realm.

Thus, it is crucial to come to a decisive experience—
an instantaneous and naturally abiding meditative absorption—
within inner basic space, now and in the future.

If in this life you do not recognize natural meditative stability in its place of original purity, then even though your meditation is stable it is similar to that of a god in a realm of meditative stability. This can-

not bring you freedom, but will only bind you once again and cause you to take rebirth in one of the higher realms. *The Commentary on the Oral Lineage* states:

Although you understand meditation, you don't understand freedom.

How are you different from a god in a realm of meditative stability?

Therefore, since awareness holds to its own place in inner basic space, empty yet lucid, it blends inseparably with precious dharmakaya—spontaneous presence—as soon as the body is cast aside. The two manifestations of rupakaya then spontaneously ensure the welfare of beings. That is to say, one holds to the enlightened intent of “the one who rides the wind effortlessly,” and when respiration ceases—after one exhales for the last time and cannot inhale again—awareness, inwardly lucid, becomes free of subtle energy. Thus, in the absence of the ordinary mind of habitual patterns, the enlightened intent of dharmakaya arises—a deeply indwelling lucidity like that of space. With recognition of this as the very essence, one instantly awakens to buddhahood in an unobstructed leap. *The Natural Freedom That Underlies Characteristics* states:

For example, the great garuda, most majestic of birds,
though yet unhatched overwhelms nagas with its splendor.
Its wings reach full development while still within the egg.
Once freed from the confines of the shell, it soars far above
the earth.

How could this be easy for other birds? How could it be so?
But it is so for the great garuda, who is completely at ease
in the sky.

There is freedom whether or not one realizes it.

Evenness means there is no distinction between present
and future lives,

and the realm of evenness is uninterrupted.

For those who believe that freedom comes about through the nine
spiritual approaches
or believe in thorough training, renunciation, or transformation,
whatever they believe accords with the supreme approach itself.

Why does it accord? Everything is supreme bliss, the expanse
of dharmakaya,
and there is nothing that is not free within the expanse
of dharmakaya.

The nature of phenomena is naturally arising, the kaya
of the vajra heart essence.

The dynamic energy of this heart essence is perfect within any
embodiment based on habitual patterns.

Even though that embodiment is cast off, awareness is not subject
to birth, death, or the intermediate state,
for it alone is inseparable from everything,
so emanations occur without restriction
and are active everywhere without impediment.

This is the depth of immersion in genuine being—"the one who
rides the wind effortlessly."

It does not apply to any inferior spiritual approaches.

The discovery that it applies to ati is the key point of fruition.

Even while confined within its shell, the garuda suppresses the many kinds of nagas with its splendor and has the ability to soar in the sky, since its strong wings are already fully developed. Similarly, by engaging in the most majestic of spiritual approaches, one immersed in genuine being overwhelms the other eight approaches, and has the ability to cross the abyss of samsara through realization and so dance in the sky of the nature of phenomena. Just as the garuda flies as soon as it hatches, one immersed in genuine being awakens to buddhahood upon being freed from the confines of the physical body.

In summary:

One comes to a decisive experience of all possible phenomena
in the spontaneous presence of awareness.

One comes to a decisive experience of spontaneous presence
in its natural place of rest, supreme original purity.

One comes to a decisive experience of original purity—
inconceivable, unimaginable, and inexpressible.

This is the decisive experience of spontaneous presence.

Since all phenomena come from awareness, one comes to a decisive experience of them within the scope of spontaneously present

awareness. One comes to a decisive experience of spontaneous presence in dharmakaya, its natural place of rest, the inner basic space of original purity. And one comes to a decisive experience of original purity, free of limits, as the supreme ground of freedom beyond imagination or expression. *The Pearl Garland* states:

Freedom is that which is at the beginning.

And *The Natural Freedom That Underlies Characteristics* states:

There is no differentiation or exclusion—freedom in the expanse of spontaneous presence.

This is not made and then unmade—freedom in the expanse of the sphere of being.



Within the expanse of spontaneous presence, awakened mind, phenomena are always naturally arising and naturally free—primordial basic space.

The nature of the single sphere of being, the ultimate meaning of the heart essence,

has been explained in this precious commentary that analyzes the third topic.

Gods who side with what is good, oath-bound guardians, vajra heirs who are masters of awareness with dynamic intention, oceans of dakas and dakinis, deities who gain sublime spiritual attainments,

and hosts of gurus who are our glorious protectors—rejoice in this!

From *The Precious Treasury of the Way of Abiding*, this is the commentary on the third vajra topic, reaching the definitive conclusion concerning the timeless and spontaneous presence of all phenomena.

4

The Theme of Oneness

Next, all phenomena are shown to be one in naturally occurring timeless awareness. This is considered under four headings: revealing the key point, discerning the implications, embracing the larger scope, and coming to the decisive experience.

Revealing the Key Point

To reveal the key point, all phenomena are first shown to have the same source:

Next, the nature of oneness is revealed.

Awareness—oneness—is the ground of all phenomena.

Although there is the appearance of multiplicity, to say that
there is no wavering from oneness

is to say that naturally occurring timeless awareness is the
single source.

Although fire and water manifest¹ separately
from a single gem under specific circumstances,
their source—the pure gem—is the same.

Similarly, although both samsara and nirvana arise from oneness,
self-knowing awareness,
their source—ultimate awakened mind—is the same.
There is simply the illusion of difference based on whether
or not awareness is recognized.

Fire or water comes from a single gem because of the specific properties of the sunlight or moonlight shining on it. Similarly, there are

different manifestations: samsara, due to nonrecognition of the very essence of awareness, and nirvana, due to recognition. Although they are the display, or the arising mode, of a single awareness, in their essence they neither separate nor waver from it. *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

All phenomena are identical in their source, awakened mind.
 From the standpoint of enlightenment—the heart essence
 that is the source of everything—
 buddhas, ordinary beings, and the entire universe of appearances
 and possibilities
 do not exist as any one thing, yet any attempt to quantify them
 would be endless.
 The enlightened forms and speech of buddhas, and the bodies
 and speech of ordinary beings,
 are awakened mind, timelessly free of dualistic perception.
 That which is, in its own right, free of duality
 allows for the occurrence of everything, for it serves as the source
 of phenomena.

Everything is shown to be of one basic space, naturally occurring timeless awareness:

All things that appear in light of awareness—
 the world of appearances and possibilities, whether of samsara
 or nirvana—
 even as they manifest are one in emptiness, their very essence.²
 Like dream images, illusions, or the moon's reflection on water,
 like awareness in the four visions, and like surrounding space
 that has no substance,
 they are one in being timelessly and totally empty,
 free of elaboration.
 Since everything is of one basic space, primordially pure,
 there is no abiding as "two," for all is encompassed within
 the single sphere.
 Dharmakaya is without edges or corners. How marvelous!

All phenomena of the world of appearances and possibilities, clearly apparent yet ineffable, are of one basic space in emptiness. The essence of awareness itself is like space, a single expanse that is free of

elaboration, empty yet lucid. The emptiness of awareness and that of apparent phenomena are indivisible, of one taste in the unique non-dual sphere of uninterrupted emptiness. This is referred to as “having the same source within the basic space of dharmakaya, the unique sphere without edges or corners.” *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

The source of all phenomena is all-creating awakened mind.
Whatever manifests is my essence, whatever occurs is my
magical display.

The simultaneity of purity and equalness is shown to be naturally occurring timeless awareness:

Although the five elements manifest,³ they are the realm
of awakened mind.
Never born, they do not waver from the single state of equalness.
Although manifesting in conditioned existence, the six kinds
of beings are forms of emptiness.
The ground of being as it manifests does not waver from
the scope of awareness.
Although happiness and suffering manifest, they are within
the heart essence of enlightenment,
not wavering from a single, naturally occurring timeless
awareness.
Therefore, phenomena are of one basic space—the realm
of emptiness.
You should know them to be unborn awakened mind.

All that manifests as the five elements arises within the scope of awareness, manifests within that scope, and is freed within that scope. All that manifests as ordinary beings arises within that scope, manifests within that scope, and is freed within that scope. Thus, these are natural forms of emptiness. *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

Ah, great and courageous one, mind is the essence of what
simply is.
What simply is—nondual and supremely blissful—
supports all distinct manifestations, yet is itself utterly without
distinct features.
Abiding timelessly like space, free of elaboration,

beyond any frame of reference, it is "one" in that it cannot be enumerated.

While awakened mind cannot be quantified or characterized, phenomena created by mind come about in infinite variety.

"What is created by mind," you ask?

I have revealed that buddhas, ordinary beings, and the universe of appearances and possibilities are created from the essence—the nature of mind—and so become evident.

The manifestation of the five great elements and the six kinds of beings,

as well as the two aspects of rupakaya that ensure their benefit, constitute the nature of mind emerging in all its multiplicity.

Thus, awareness, empty yet lucid like space, is primordially pure dharmakaya, supreme emptiness that supports all distinct manifestations, utter lucidity endowed with the sublime capacity for all those manifestations. Within this scope, naturally manifest dynamic energy can and does manifest in any way whatsoever, as the impure mode of samsara or the pure mode of nirvana. Nevertheless, the ground of being as it manifests does not waver from the scope of awareness and, although perceived as impure, has never actually partaken of existence, but is timelessly awakened, with this manifest mode pure as the three kayas. *The Reverberation of Sound* states:

Moreover, owing to their circumstances, among ordinary beings there is not a single one who is not a buddha.

Because their nature is in harmony with naturally occurring⁴ timeless awareness,

samsara is never something existent.

Therefore, each being is naturally a buddha.

Once one realizes what the process of birth really is, abiding in the womb is the basic space of phenomena, the coming together of body and mind is the connection

between basic space and awareness, and abiding in the body is the three kayas.

Aging is the falling away of phenomena and the end of appearances based on confusion, illness is the experience of the nature of phenomena,

and death is emptiness, impossible to identify.
Therefore, ordinary beings are buddhas.

The sublime abode of awareness is shown to be the vast expanse of being:

The unique enlightened intent of victorious ones of the three times
dwells within this ultimate basic space, the vast expanse of self-knowing awareness.
It cannot be thought of as multiple, for it is free of fragmenting elaborations.
Truly it is the palace of the unwavering heart essence of enlightenment,
where nothing but naturally occurring timeless awareness dwells.

The essence of awareness—original purity that is the ultimate basic space of supreme emptiness—is the very essence of dharmakaya, free of elaboration. This is spoken of as the sacred palace of naturally occurring timeless awareness, the heart essence of enlightenment. *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

My nature is indivisible and free of elaboration,
so this abode, the basic space of phenomena, was created by me.
Nothing but enlightenment dwells therein.
My nature is unobscured and all-pervasive,
so the space of lucidity is the immeasurable mansion
of timeless awareness,
where nothing but naturally occurring timeless awareness dwells.

This itself is shown to be the basic space from which samsara, nirvana, and the three kayas arise:

The precious treasury of phenomena is a gem that fulfills all wishes.
This is truly the pure realm of victorious ones,
the three spontaneously present kayas.

The scope of awareness is the pure realm of all victorious ones. Even though, due to the nonrecognition of awareness, the six states of

ordinary beings manifest as samsara, this is the natural manifestation of the three kayas. Even though, in the pure mode, there is the manifestation of nirvana, this too is the natural manifestation of the three kayas. Nothing is beyond the nondual mandala of the three kayas. *The Reverberation of Sound* states:

Moreover, since all beings of the three realms
are not beyond body, speech, and mind,
there is no need to seek the three kayas elsewhere.
Even though they are sought, there is no chance
they will be found.
They never have been and never will be—
how truly marvelous it is to see this by looking.
This truly marvelous display cannot be divided into buddhas
and ordinary beings.
Like clouds in the sky, it is naturally occurring and peaceful
in its natural perfection.⁵

And *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

Since I myself am the very heart from which everything arises,
the five great elements, the three realms, and the six kinds
of beings
are none other than my enlightened form, speech, and mind,
and so they are my nature, my array.

And *The Vajra Fortress*, by the great master Garab Dorjé, states:

Within dharmakaya—unchanging, nonexistent as an object,
and extending infinitely—
the arising of the animate and inanimate universe
is sambhogakaya,
while apparent phenomena, manifesting like reflections,
are nirmanakaya.
Since there is no phenomenon that is not perfect as the adornment
of the three kayas,
everything arises from enlightened form, speech, and mind.
Without exception, countless pure realms of buddhas—
those who reach the state of bliss—
come about in the same way, so the nature of mind is the expanse
of the three kayas.

The root of samsara, of the six “cities” of beings, comes about
 in the same way,
 so habitual patterns lead to the narrow confines of the body.
 Even the suffering that occurs within the dualistic framework
 of birth and death
 is freedom within the expanse of mind and body, so there is no
 transition or change.

Since mind has no birth or death, it is like space.
 Since the body has no essence, it is like a bubble on water.
 Since mind and body are nondual, they are vajra-like.
 Since everything is already awakened within the vajra
 heart essence,
 no negative conditions cause harm, for there is nothing
 to be destroyed.

The enlightened embodiment of Vajradhara—
 unchanging and indestructible, like a majestic ruler—
 remains unseen by anyone.

The source is shown to be oneness:

The unique vast expanse is not created by anyone.
 All things that emerge from it—all possible phenomena without
 exception—
 are one within the fundamental ground from which they emerge,
 since causality is negated.
 Suchness itself, empty yet lucid, is the supremely spacious nature
 of phenomena,
 evident as pure space without extremes or biases.

When you examine what takes place and how, all the attempts you make to put an end to samsara and achieve nirvana come down to empty yet lucid awareness. This is the unobstructed resolution of phenomena in all its nakedness, as pure as the spacious sky. *The Tantra Without Letters* states:

The ultimate essence, awareness itself, is not created;
 how could there be a creator?
 It is not contrived; there is no one to contrive it.
 Not a specific point of view, it is free of any point from which
 to view.

Not a state of perception, it is a totally lucid avenue of “seeing.”
 Not that which makes things manifest, it is free of any tendency
 to manifest.

Not something that diminishes, it pervades the ten directions
 without impediment.

Not involving effort, it is beyond striving or achievement.

Not one thing, it is nevertheless free of multiplicity.

Not entailing a specific standpoint, it transcends both affirmation
 and denial.

Awareness—oneness—is shown to be the basic space of phenomena:

Although the single naturally occurring state creates all samsara
 and nirvana,

without anyone creating awareness, which is the source,
 it abides like space, beyond deliberate effort.

With this metaphor and its underlying meaning in harmony,
 all value judgments concerning diverse phenomena
 are pacified within the vast expanse of a single basic space.

Through a failure to realize awakened mind—awareness that is like space—samsara is created, manifesting as the universe. Through such realization, nirvana is created, manifesting as the kayas and timeless awareness. Although awareness creates everything, this awareness is unique in not being created by anything, abiding timelessly as spontaneous presence. Understanding is brought about through the metaphor of space, the underlying meaning as awareness, and the expressions that arise ceaselessly from awakened mind as evidence of its presence. *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

I am the teacher, all-creating awakened mind.

Awakened mind is the all-creating monarch.

Awakened mind creates the buddhas of the three times.

Awakened mind creates the beings of the three realms.

Awakened mind creates the universe of all appearances
 and possibilities.

It creates harmony between cause and result, between metaphor,
 underlying meaning, and rationale.

From the perspective of cause, it creates the five great elements.

From the perspective of result, it creates the beings
of the three realms.

From the perspective of metaphor, space serves as the
universal metaphor.

From the perspective of underlying meaning, its unborn quality
serves as the universal meaning.

From the perspective of its evidence, awakened mind
is all-creating.

From the perspective of its rationale, naturally occurring
timeless awareness can be demonstrated.

It creates harmony between cause and result, between metaphor,
underlying meaning, and rationale.

Awakened mind creates everything, but it alone remains
uncreated.

Everything created is created through the nature of awakened
mind,

which alone remains uncreated and so need not be created.

Without realization of the nature of me, the all-creating one,
there is exhaustive labeling of my creations,
so that apparent phenomena are entrenched by powerful
attachment.

Impermanent, they are illusory by nature and so will disintegrate.

The situation is like that of a blind person who cannot see what is
going on.

The essence of awareness is shown to be beyond imagination and expression:

Within the ultimate heart essence, which transcends existence
and nonexistence,

all phenomena are unceasing, and regardless of the display
that arises⁶

their very essence is the unimaginable and inexpressible expanse.
This is truly beyond all conventional expression and description.

Regardless of what arises within the scope of awareness, whether samsara or nirvana, in essence it is the supreme manifestation of the ground of being as apparent phenomena, which has never existed as anything within naturally occurring timeless awareness—the natural

place of rest as original purity, spontaneously present basic space. *The Pearl Garland* states:

In original purity, purity from the very beginning,
not even the word “confusion” can be expressed.

Similarly, how could there be a lack of confusion?

Therefore, confusion is primordially pure.

In the supreme manifestation of the ground of being

as apparent phenomena,
there is nothing to be labeled “nonrecognition,” so confusion
has never existed.

Since what is termed “ordinary consciousness” is not something
to be labeled in any way,

even the term “confusing distortions” does not exist.

Since there are no words, syllables, or phrases,
the confusion of labeling does not exist.

Since consciousness of phenomena cannot be labeled,
even the expression “confusion due to mental labeling”
does not exist.

Since nothing has ever existed as ordinary mind
or consciousness,

inevitably there is no confusion that stirs the mind.

Since there are neither coarse nor subtle distortions,
inevitably there is no perpetuating force of confusion.

Since there is neither anything to be done nor the doing,
how could there be confusion that reifies objects?

Since there are neither sense objects nor sense faculties,
there is no confusion due to dualistic perception.

Although all things manifest within a single awareness, they are shown
not to waver from that oneness:

From the standpoint of enlightenment, the heart essence
from which everything arises,
there is no duality, and any attempt to quantify things
would be endless.⁷

Buddhas, ordinary beings, and the universe of appearances
and possibilities are evident,
yet do not waver from the single nature of phenomena,
just as it is.

Within the scope of the completely ineffable essence of a single awareness, the world of appearances and possibilities—*samsara* and *nirvana*—arises in inconceivable and countless ways, but in arising it does not go beyond that nondual scope. *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

From the standpoint of enlightenment, the heart essence that is
the source of everything,
these do not exist as any one thing, yet any attempt to quantify
them would be endless.
The enlightened forms and speech of buddhas, and the bodies
and speech of ordinary beings,
are awakened mind, timelessly free of dualistic perception.

The conclusion to this section is drawn within oneness—that is, awareness:

Everything is connected in oneness—the perfection
of phenomena.
This is the supreme quality of awakened mind.
When anything manifests, cut through all conventional⁸
exaggeration.
All outer phenomena⁹ are to be known as the inherent radiance¹⁰
of the nature of mind, empty and nondual,
while inner phenomena are nothing other than awareness
as such.
Within the nature of phenomena, nonexistent as one or many,
the realization of a single basic space¹¹ is revealed to be
the key point of awareness.

All phenomena that manifest as outer sense objects are known to be the inherent radiance of awareness, its unceasing quality like light from a crystal globe. So there is freedom from ordinary consciousness, which takes them to be “other”; such reified objects have never existed. The inner phenomenon of awareness exposed in all its nakedness is understood to be like that globe. Thus, ordinary mind that is reified as a subject does not exist, and so phenomena are resolved within original purity. The nonduality of objects and mind is realized to be the basic space of the naturally manifest display of awakened

mind. Thus, all phenomena are of a single taste within oneness—naturally occurring timeless awareness. *The Tantra of Naturally Occurring Perfection: The River of Empowerment* states:

Dharmakaya—the scope of emptiness,
naturally occurring timeless awareness, nonconceptual
basic space—
is revealed to be the heart essence of awareness, empty yet lucid.
Empty timeless awareness, ineffable by nature,
and spontaneously present phenomena constitute
great perfection.

And *The Direct Encounter with the Three Kayas* states:

The basic space of phenomena is a precious wish-fulfilling gem.
Since everything occurs naturally without effort,
naturally occurring timeless awareness is the splendor that fulfills
all wishes.

Awakened mind is the all-inclusive source.

Awakened mind is nondual, since it is neither made nor unmade.
The basic space of phenomena is evenness, since there is no self
or other.

Discerning the Implications

Now the implications of everything as a single state of naturally occurring timeless awareness can be discerned. One implication that can be discerned is that consciousness and apparent phenomena in themselves constitute this naturally occurring awareness:

One implication that can be discerned is that all phenomena
are of one taste.

All apparent objects are unreal appearances—the realm
of emptiness.

Regardless of how things appear, rest within what is singularly
uncontrived.

The unique simultaneity of emptiness and lucidity arises in the
immediacy of whatever manifests.

When anything manifests, rest in naturally unsullied awareness, in
a supreme state without reification, lucid and unceasing. With this,

the nature of phenomena arises, empty yet lucid and free of elaboration. *The Great Garuda* states:

The implications of supreme and naturally occurring relaxation within the immediacy of apparent phenomena and consciousness can be discerned within the “interval” between cause and effect, naturally arising and free of elaboration.

And *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

Completely pure meditative absorption in the unborn nature of everything does not depend on circumstances, on whether or not one is meditating.

The focus of meditation is all phenomena, however they manifest.

Since there is no technique that specifies how or where to rest, one meditates by resting in the natural state, without seeking.

And *The Six Expanses* states:

In the nature of mind, which has nothing to do with reification, the manifestation of apparent phenomena, unceasing and pure, is revealed by me, Samantabhadra, to be meditative absorption in the supreme display.

Another implication that can be discerned is that the simultaneous arising and freeing of thoughts constitutes naturally occurring timeless awareness:

All thought patterns involving ordinary mind and apparent phenomena fade away naturally¹²—the realm of emptiness. However the mind stirs,¹³ rest gently in utter relaxation. The nature of phenomena is evident as enlightened intent¹⁴ in the immediacy of the mind stirring and thoughts proliferating.

However the mind stirs, if this is understood to be the display of naturally occurring timeless awareness (like waves on water), just by one’s letting go, freedom comes about in the nonduality of mental states of abiding and stirring. *The Great Garuda* states:

The implications of whatever manifests being the miraculous display of ordinary, conceptual mind can be discerned within the “interval” between phenomena and the conceptual process.

And *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

Within enlightenment—the nature of phenomena that cannot be cultivated in meditation—there is no duality of meditation and something upon which to meditate, so one meditates by resting naturally without deliberately meditating. Ultimate reality, the meaning underlying everything, is unborn. With the awareness that discursive thoughts and characteristics are likewise, not a single ordinary thought process that stirs the mind ever diverges from the context of being unborn. So, however thought occurs, if one understands that this is meditation there is no distraction, regardless of what transpires, even if one does not try to meditate.

And *The Six Expanses* states:

In the nature of mind, which entails no focusing of attention, what would cause it to stir manifests as naturally pure. This is revealed by me, Samantabhadra, to be meditative stability as the natural freedom that underlies reification.

Another implication that can be discerned is that mental states of abiding and stirring do not constitute a duality:

In the natural context of evenness, with no split between objects and mind, rest¹⁵ free of any framework, with naturally pristine perception that leaves no trace. Timeless awareness—profound insight—is evident within the ultimate state of innate lucidity.

By maintaining the awareness referred to in the two preceding source verses, one naturally experiences a state of pure clarity in which there is no split between objects and mind. With one's gaze and consciousness focused in the immediacy of apparent phenomena, inwardly it is evident that these are naturally pristine and leave no trace. *The Perfect Dynamic Energy of the Lion* states:

As lucid awareness regards the “object”—the nature
of phenomena—
this awareness, free of complication, is perceived inwardly.
As self-knowing awareness regards the diversity of objects,
nonconceptual and supreme dharmakaya is discovered inwardly.

The Great Garuda discusses how such implications are discerned:

The implications of the spontaneous vast expanse, supreme
and unsought,
can be discerned within the “interval” between apparent
phenomena and emptiness,
in which nothing need be said or done.

And *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

Since there is nothing to be done, do not act with effort.
Since there is no frame of reference, there is freedom from any
idea of meditation.
Since there is no union and then separation, rest in the mind that
does not forget.

And *The Six Expanses* states:

In the nature of mind, which has nothing to do with acceptance
or rejection,
the manifestation of natural freedom, without extremes,
is revealed by me, Samantabhadra,
to be supremely pervasive enlightened intent.

The meaning of the preceding sections is reviewed:

With the implications of three essential points being discerned
within a single heart essence—

that of evenness that is timeless whether or not there
is realization,
that of evenness in dharmakaya with no duality of objects
and mind,
and that of evenness within enlightened intent with neither
error nor obscuration¹⁶—
the ultimate and natural place is held without interruption.
With nothing discarded or adopted, the definitive heart essence
is discovered.
With no coming or going, there is abiding in enlightened intent,
the nature of phenomena.
There is fulfillment on the level that is without transition
or change.

There is evenness, with no duality of objects and mind, when one rests imperturbably in relation to apparent phenomena, and so one discovers enlightened intent in which nothing is discarded or adopted. There is evenness whether or not thoughts occur, for mental stirring and proliferating thoughts arise as meditative absorption when one rests imperturbably in awareness, and so one discovers enlightened intent that neither comes nor goes. There is evenness without any error or obscuration whether or not the mind abides or stirs, and so one discovers uninterrupted enlightened intent. The implication, discerned by virtue of these three discoveries being inseparable, is that there is no straying from the naturally unsullied nature of phenomena, and so the six modes of consciousness are gently relaxed. *The Great Garuda* states:

The implications of “warmth”—of relaxed, fresh, and
genuine being—
can be discerned within the “interval” between samsara and
nirvana as one focuses on the natural state of being.

And *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

Ah! In supreme bliss, just as it is, effortless,
do not make any effort with body, speech, or mind.
Do not contrive reality or create constructs.
Do not conceptualize.
Do not be influenced by ordinary distinctions.

Rest in the ultimate experience of bliss—naturally occurring timeless awareness.

Do not adopt postures, suppress the senses, or restrict speech, for nothing need be undertaken.

Mind will rest without wavering, wherever it goes.

And *The Six Expanses* states:

In the nature of mind, which does not entail dullness or agitation, meditation as supreme equanimity is revealed by me, Samantabhadra, to be enlightened intent as the relaxation of the six modes of consciousness.

The preceding applies to immersing oneself in genuine being by realizing the equalness of the three times. The same source states:

For anyone who does not hold on to traces from the past or anticipate the future, but lets consciousness rest moment by moment in its own place, all consciousness blends as one, without any distinction of earlier or later, in what I call “the single unifying essence.” This is to immerse oneself in genuine being knowing the equalness of the three times. Through this skillful means of allowing focused attention to resolve naturally, samsara and nirvana blend in nonduality. To bring an end to recollection of the past, curb anticipation of the future, and allow consideration of the present to fade naturally is what I call “immersing oneself in genuine being by knowing the equalness of the three times.”

Moreover, if one does not fixate on previous states of mind, does not rely upon future states of mind, and does not pay attention to present states of mind, one becomes immersed in genuine being by realizing the equalness of the three times.

If one does not give the slightest credence to nonrecognition of awareness in the past, invite nonrecognition in the future, or associate intimately with nonrecognition in the present, one becomes immersed in genuine being by knowing the equalness of the three times.

If one is not attached to past aversion, does not usher in future aversion, and does not hone present aversion, one is said to be “immersed in genuine being by virtue of realizing the equalness of the three times.”

If one does not gather the clouds of past ignorance, till the soil of future ignorance, or bring down the rain of present ignorance, one is said to be “immersed in genuine being by virtue of realizing the equalness of the three times.”

One who does not acknowledge past pride, invest future pride with significance, or devote energy to present pride is said to be “immersed in genuine being, the equalness of the three times.”¹⁷

One who does not try to renounce past desire and attachment, is not resigned to future desire and attachment, and banishes all present desire and attachment is immersed in genuine being, the equalness of the three times.

One who does not cling to past envy, focus on future envy, or dwell on present envy is immersed in genuine being by virtue of realizing the equalness of the three times.

Then one is known as “someone great who is immersed in genuine being by virtue of realizing the nonduality of samsara and nirvana.”

This advice also applies to positive concepts about buddhahood, as well as meditative experiences that result from the application of spiritual antidotes. Through such practice, the four factors of view, meditation, conduct, and fruition will occur spontaneously and all at once within a single awareness, empty yet lucid. *The Spoken Words: The Secret Oral Lineage*, by the master Shri Singha, states:

Awakened mind is like empty space.

The highest meditation has nothing to do with concepts
or focused attention.

One’s own nature is unwavering and uncontrived.

The mind of a holy person abides thus in suchness.

Buddhahood is unique, free of all representation.

View is unique, free of the limits of elaboration.

Meditation is unique, free of the limits of concepts
or focused attention.

Conduct is unique, free of the limits of effort or achievement.

Fruition is unique, free of the limits of renunciation
or attainment.

In this context there arises meditative stability without there being union and then separation. As to the essence of this, *The Perfect Dynamic Energy of the Lion* states:

Dharmakaya is nonconceptual and naturally pristine meditation.
 There is no objective frame of reference.
 If the meaning of this is realized,
 there is supreme meditative stability
 without there being union and then separation.
 This is revealed to be the naturally manifest fruition.

And *The Tantra of Heaped Jewels* states:

In natural and uninterrupted meditative stability,
 there is no dullness or agitation—how amazing!

The meaning is summarized as being a single state of freedom:

Spacious, supreme—the enlightened mind of victorious ones,
 equal to space.
 No renunciation or attainment—the expanse of a single sphere.
 Freedom in its own place—no question of whether or not there
 is realization.
 The point of resolution is reached—expansion into openness
 that transcends ordinary mind.
 From the pinnacle of the victory banner that never falls
 shine the sun and moon that illuminate the entire universe.

With awakening to unobstructed awareness, naked in its timeless freedom, one reaches dharmakaya—enlightened intent in which phenomena are resolved. At the pinnacle of the unfailing victory banner of realization, the radiant sun and moon of naturally occurring timeless awareness shine within supreme emptiness, endowed with all potential, which constitutes the scope of awareness, thus “dispelling the darkness that is the basis for confinement in samsara and nirvana.” At that point one is freed in primordial being. *The Natural Freedom That Underlies Characteristics* states:

No differentiation or exclusion—freedom in the expanse
 of spontaneous presence.
 Neither made nor unmade—freedom in the expanse
 of the sphere of being.
 Anything can arise—freedom in the indeterminate expanse.

As for the way of freedom, *The Reverberation of Sound* states:

Furthermore, I will explain¹⁸ the nature of phenomena
as freedom.

Freedom is at the very core, so exertion falls away.¹⁹

Freedom is timeless, so there is no need to create it anew.

Freedom is natural, so there is no antidote.

Since there is freedom in the bare act of perception, things fade²⁰
in the very moment of seeing them.

Freedom is absolute, so there is natural purity.

Freedom is beyond time, so gradual familiarization
is unnecessary.

Freedom is natural, so it is uncontrived.

“Freedom” is just a conventional designation.

To whom or what does realization or its lack apply?

What in this case can be thought of as “freedom”?

Under what circumstances could there be involvement
in the three realms?

Freedom from the limits of conditioned existence is the nature
of phenomena.

And *The Pearl Garland* states:

Freedom is timeless, so it is forever exalted.

Freedom is natural, so circumstances fall away.

There is freedom in the immediacy of perception, so apparent
phenomena are pure.

With freedom from limits, the four alternatives cease.

Freedom is oneness, so it is devoid of multiplicity.²¹

Since circumstances are freed by circumstances,

I do not rely on constructs.

Since objects are freed by objects,

I do not rely on dualistic perception.

Since causes themselves are freed by causes,

I do not rely on either samsara or nirvana.

Since phenomena are freed by phenomena,

I do not rely on conventional designations.

Since the nature of mind is freed by mind,

I do not rely on mental representation and description.

Just as impurities can be cleansed with impurities,

likewise purity is freed by purity.

When poisons are used to counteract poisons,
 iron to cut iron,
 stones to shatter stones,
 and wood to burn wood,
 they serve as their own undoing.
 Otherwise, there would be incompatibility, not freedom.

The same source states how the total purity of this timeless freedom is relevant:

There is no freedom due to effort;
 rather, there is timeless abiding in freedom.
 With the uniting of skillful means and sublime knowing,
 the causal factors—one's father and mother—are pure.
 The impetus due to the subtle energy of momentum
 is enlightened awareness, self-knowing and supremely blissful.
 With the five elements as their causal factors,
 the ovum and sperm are apparent phenomena arising within
 the domain of emptiness.
 The blissful union of a couple is sublime knowing that comes
 from skillful means.
 With entrance into the matrix of the womb,
 self-knowing awareness arises as apparent phenomena
 from the ground of being.²²
 The first seven weeks are the period in which realization
 develops;
 by ten months, the levels of realization are traversed.
 Birth is the arising of enlightened embodiment.
 The development of the body is the manifest domain
 of the ground of being.
 To abide in the body is the ground of being.
 Aging is the clearing away of confusion.
 Illness is the indwelling confidence of realization.
 With death there is freedom in the empty nature of phenomena.
 Thus, beings, manifest in physical form, are effortlessly
 and timelessly free.
 How marvelous!
 Not altered by conduct, things, in appearing, are free.
 Not sought in meditation, phenomena are free.

With nothing to be posited²³ through view, there is freedom from affirmation and denial.

Fruition is unconstrained, so the natural way is freedom.

Embracing the Larger Scope

Now, the larger scope is embraced. Everything is of one basic space, subsumed within naturally occurring timeless awareness:

All phenomena are embraced within a single self-knowing awareness.

Even though they arise as the totality of samsara and nirvana, the phenomena of the world of appearances and possibilities—limitless, boundless²⁴—arise from basic space.

Therefore, they are subsumed within the basic space from which they first arise.

Given that all phenomena arise within the scope of awareness, in arising they are embraced from the outset within that single awareness. *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

Without causes or conditions, the quintessence has power over everything and is all-creating.

Regardless of how things appear, they are embraced within awareness:

Even as myriad things appear, they do not stray from the scope of awareness,
so these apparent phenomena are embraced within the expanse of that naturally occurring awareness.

However things appear moment by moment, they appear in light of awareness and so are subsumed in light of awareness. *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

I am, in that I am awakened mind.

I abide, in that I abide within basic space, the nature of phenomena.

I am lucid, in that I am the lucidity within the space of awareness.

In the final analysis, they are embraced within a single awareness:

Although subsiding in basic space, with no distinction between
their arising and being freed,
they are nothing other than awakened mind,
and so are embraced by the single primordial nature in which
phenomena are resolved.

All phenomena finally revert to and are freed within the scope of awareness, as in the metaphor of clouds dispersing in the sky. This resolution within the basic space of dharmakaya—the simultaneity of awareness and emptiness—is embraced as the supreme nature of phenomena. *The Natural Freedom That Underlies Characteristics* states:

The confused mind that conceives of things as identical
or separate
is freed in oneness, freed within the expanse of the nature
of phenomena.
The hindrance to enlightenment—holding to the path
of samsara—
is freed in the naturally occurring state, freed within the expanse
of timeless awareness.

The meaning of this section is summarized by the fact that everything is embraced within naturally occurring timeless awareness:

Therefore, all phenomena are embraced within a single
awareness.
The ultimate heart essence, without transition or change,
is embraced within the very heart of enlightenment,
unwavering awareness.
It is fully encompassed as that which is unchanging
and noncomposite.

Since the entire world of appearances and possibilities, whether of samsara or nirvana, is encompassed within awareness—Samantabhadra, the nature of phenomena—phenomena are none other than that awareness, awakened mind. *The Perfect Dynamic Energy of the Lion* states:

The world of appearances and possibilities—*samsara, nirvana,*
 the five elements—
 is encompassed within the spacious expanse of Samantabhadra's
 bhaga.

And *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

Therefore, while the entire universe of appearances
 and possibilities
 is ineffable and does not abide in any fixed way within
 the context of space,
 given the enormity of the vast expanse of awakened mind,
 buddhas, ordinary beings, and the universe all abide therein.

The same source continues:

I, the all-creating monarch, have never proclaimed
 to previous buddhas who arose from me in the past
 that there are phenomena that are other than mind.
 The all-creating monarch has not prophesied any other
 enlightenment
 to those who are present now or who will appear in the future.

Coming to the Decisive Experience

Now, in coming to the decisive experience of everything as naturally occurring timeless awareness, one comes to a decisive experience of the ultimate heart essence without beginning or end:

Within oneness,²⁵ the decisive experience is that of naturally occurring timeless awareness itself.
 Basic space is without beginning or end.
 Everything is complete therein; all elaborations completely subside.²⁶
 All phenomena abide in the ultimate heart essence, the nature of phenomena.

Even while everything is manifesting, it is encompassed within naturally occurring timeless awareness without beginning or end, and so does not waver from the context of the ultimate heart essence, which is empty yet lucid. *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

There is no wavering from within, no object to be sought within.
Objects form externally, yet there is no elaboration of those
objects.

Compassion—not arising from or engaging such objects,
and without identity—
is not derived from anything else, nor will it ever be;
rather, it abides timelessly.

Within naturally occurring timeless awareness, one comes to a decisive experience that has nothing to do with objects of dualistic perception:

In this way, outer objects and inner mind—the phenomena
of samsara and nirvana—
are free of fragmenting elaborations that distinguish coarse
from subtle.

One comes to this decisive experience within basic space,
timelessly empty like the sky.

Sense objects, which are reified as the outer world and its contents, are empty (for there are not even any subatomic particles to be divided), yet manifest naturally within the scope of awareness. As well, inner mind is empty (for there are not even any moments of consciousness to be divided) and vanishes in awareness, fading naturally and leaving no trace. Both are timelessly empty, free of origin, and pure like the sky. *The Victory Banner That Never Falls: Supreme Space* states:

Outwardly and inwardly, or even on the outward level alone,
there is no object to be conceptualized on even the most minute
or profound level.

Conditioned existence is just a term—the power of error.

One comes to a decisive experience of awareness, beyond characterization or description:

Even awakened mind, if analyzed, has no substance.
It is without origination or duration, does not come or go,
cannot be characterized, and is beyond expression.
Since one comes to this decisive experience within the expanse
of enlightened intent that surpasses ordinary mind,

there is no substance²⁷ with characteristics that can be defined as some “thing.”

There is nothing to be known through language or expressed in words.

Regardless of what occurs or arises out of awareness (that is, naturally occurring timeless awareness)—be it the world of appearances and possibilities (whether of samsara or nirvana), dualistic perceptions, or a spiritual approach—everything is perfect, encompassed within that awareness, awakened mind, and so is encompassed within great perfection. Although the nature of phenomena—awakened mind—is all-pervasive such that everything abides within its scope, in its essence it abides timelessly like space, beyond the reach of any imagined or descriptive elaborations. *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

Ah, listen, great and courageous one!

This is my nature: I exist, in that I am nothing but oneness.

I am revealed, in that I reveal myself in two ways.

I occur, in that I occur as the nine spiritual approaches.

I am encompassed, in that I am encompassed within great perfection.

I am, in that I am awakened mind.

I abide, in that I abide within basic space, the nature of phenomena.

I am lucid, in that I am lucidity within the space of awareness.

I am pervasive, in that I pervade the entire universe.

I occur, in that I occur throughout the world of all appearances and possibilities.

I am revealed, yet am not some substance with characteristics.

In being seen, I am nonetheless free of any objective frame of reference.

In being known, I nevertheless cannot be expressed in words.

This heart essence, which does not result from causes, is free of all exaggeration.

If you wish to realize its ultimate meaning with certainty, the metaphor compares it to space, the underlying meaning is the unborn nature of phenomena, and the evidence is the unceasing nature of mind.

Since the nature of phenomena is like space,

it is illustrated by the metaphor that likens it to space.
 Since the nature of phenomena has no frame of reference,
 I have characterized and revealed it to be nonreferential.
 Since it cannot be expressed in words,
 I use the word "inexpressible" to describe it.
 This is revealed to be the ultimate nonreferential essence.
 To summarize, the meaning that has been revealed relates
 to the ultimate essence.
 This will bring realization of me, the ultimate meaning.
 If through this you do not realize me, the ultimate meaning,
 no matter what terms are used for this meaning, you will not
 encounter me.
 You will stray from me and I will be hidden,
 so you will not perceive what is at the very heart of phenomena.

In summary, one comes to a decisive experience of the resolution of phenomena as a supreme and unnameable state:

Within the vast expanse—unnameable and free of elaboration—
 one comes to a decisive experience of the phenomena
 of the world of appearances and possibilities, whether of samsara
 or nirvana.
 Within the vast expanse—the unborn simultaneity of awareness
 and emptiness—
 one comes to a decisive experience concerning the phenomena
 of one's own self-knowing awareness.
 Within the vast expanse—which has nothing to do with the
 recognition or nonrecognition of awareness—
 one comes to a decisive experience concerning the phenomena
 of awakened mind.
 Within the vast expanse—with no transition or change
 throughout the three times—
 one comes to a decisive experience concerning timelessly
 and totally empty phenomena.

All possible phenomena of samsara and nirvana arise within the scope of awareness, timelessly free of elaboration, and it is ultimately within that awareness that one comes to a decisive experience of these phenomena. As *The Reverberation of Sound*²⁸ explains:

The level of freedom itself is the original state.

One comes to a decisive experience of all phenomena arising from awareness within the unborn simultaneity of that awareness and emptiness. *The Great Victory Banner That Never Falls* states:

This amazing, marvelous display
abides like space, without anything needing to be done.

One comes to a decisive experience of all phenomena of awakened mind as nondual. The same source states:

Incomparable timeless awareness accounts for spontaneously present supreme bliss.

Having nothing to do with either the recognition or nonrecognition of awareness,
this bliss is experienced through its own power and so does not come from anything else.

One comes to a decisive experience of all empty phenomena being without transition or change. The same source also states:

There is no change, only ongoing abiding.
This is like space—limitations are evened out—
and it is not something that relies on anything else.

Thus, in naturally occurring timeless awareness—the simultaneity of awareness and emptiness—enlightened form, speech, and mind abide in the supreme spontaneous presence, empty yet lucid, that is the uncreated nature of phenomena, originally pure by its very nature. *The Tantra of Adornment Through Direct Introduction* states:

Due to the nature of the vajra—enlightened form—
there is abiding in the realm that is unchanging
and indestructible.

Due to the nature of the lotus—enlightened speech—
there is abiding in the quintessence that is unceasing,
forever unceasing.

Due to the nature of the wheel—enlightened mind—
there is abiding in supreme, nonconceptual meditative stability.

And *The Tantra of the Supreme Secret: The Enlightened Mind of All Tathagatas* states:

The three kayas—utterly lucid emptiness—
 are not permanent, for they have no substance.
 They cannot be denied, for they embody utter lucidity.
 They are not separate, not divisible into outer or inner.
 The spacious kayas of unobstructed emptiness
 are the inseparability of appearance and emptiness—intangible.
 Enlightened form is without origination, transition, or change.
 Enlightened speech is unborn ultimate speech,
 unspoken in words yet clear in meaning,
 beyond any words that could describe or express it.
 Enlightened mind is awareness, pure like space.
 There is no “I”-consciousness, no basis of ordinary experience,
 no sensory consciousness.

There is no sensation and so no feeling,
 no perception and so no reification of self,
 no mental states and so no origination or duration,
 no consciousness and so no confusion,
 no objects of the five senses and so no reification,
 no desire and so no attachment,
 no benefit or harm and so no karmic ripening,
 no belief in identity and so no reification of self.

Timeless awareness is evident when there is no confusion
 involving the five senses.

The nature of everything is evenness, buddhahood.
 There is no distortion in enlightened form, speech, or mind,
 nothing to be seen with view, nothing to cultivate in meditation,
 no involvement in conduct,
 no levels or paths to be traversed.

And *The All-Illuminating Sphere* states:

Lucid yet nonconceptual timeless awareness is dharmakaya.
 It manifests naturally in and of itself—the universe as timeless
 buddhahood.

The two poles of ordinary reaction and enlightened
 responsiveness are totally pure.

The levels of realization and the process of complete liberation
 already partake of sublime enlightenment,
 so there is nothing to be traversed.

The nature of phenomena is sublime enlightenment.

If one believes in progress, one is far from timeless awareness.
 Without being gathered, the two accumulations are nonetheless
 timelessly perfected.

Without being refined, the two obscurations are nonetheless
 timelessly refined.



Everything is of one basic space—the scope of naturally occurring
 timeless awareness.

All phenomena without exception are of one taste in total purity,
 and so nonduality, as the meaning of the definitive conclusion
 concerning oneness,

has been explained in this precious commentary that analyzes
 the fourth topic.

Victorious ones abiding in the ten directions and three times,
 dakas and dakinis, masters of accomplishment, masters
 of awareness, and guardian deities,
 as well as all beings, without exception, who have the good
 fortune to receive this sublime teaching—
 rejoice in this profound and vast approach!

From *The Precious Treasury of the Way of Abiding*, this is the com-
 mentary on the fourth vajra topic, reaching the definitive conclusion
 concerning the oneness of all phenomena within awareness—timeless
 awareness—as their source.

The Individuals to Whom These Teachings May Be Entrusted

Now, there follows my advice concerning individuals who are to uphold these teachings. This is considered under five topics: who is being instructed, who instructs, what is being imparted, how it is imparted, and extolling the benefits and advantages of the instruction.

The Candidates for Instruction

First, to describe the candidates for instruction, there are two categories, those to be rejected and those to be accepted. To begin with, a general discussion of the candidates to be rejected:

Thus, this quintessential nectar of the most profound spiritual approach
should be revealed only to individuals who are definitely
of the highest intelligence and good fortune,
not to those who follow lesser spiritual approaches, those biased
toward causality,
or those whose intelligence and good fortune are limited.

Even if something profound were revealed to those who are less fortunate, they would not realize it. Those of limited intelligence would reject this teaching, because their minds could not accommodate it. Those who follow lesser spiritual approaches are biased toward their own philosophies, and so would entertain erroneous views. Those who are biased toward teachings about cause and effect

weigh everything solely in terms of karmic causality, so that even if this teaching, which is like space, were revealed to them, they would dispute it and see it as something to be exaggerated or denigrated. This demonstrates that, since none of these are suitable candidates, it is necessary to keep this unsurpassable teaching secret from them. *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

O great and courageous one, if I were to reveal
 this ultimate meaning to those who follow spiritual approaches
 based upon causes and results,
 in accordance with such teachings on the mundane process
 of causality
 they would hear me say, “It is not logical for results to come
 from causes.”

The same source continues:

I, the all-creating one, do not reveal this transmission
 to those who follow spiritual approaches based on causes
 and results.
 If I were to reveal this transmission definitively,
 they would claim, “Causality applies to positive and
 negative actions,”
 exaggerating or denigrating me, the truth,
 and so they would not encounter for a long time the truth
 that I am.

And *The Heaped Jewels* makes such statements as the following, cited previously:

“Do not utter even a word of this among shravakas, pratyeka-buddhas, and others! Why is this, you ask? Because they have small minds. Upon hearing these words, they will become frightened, terrified, and will faint. They will have no interest in the secret mantra approach and so they will repudiate it, and as the inevitable karmic consequence of this they will experience rebirth as beings in a vast hell realm. Therefore, you should not even speak upwind of them, to say nothing of teaching them and their listening.”

The candidates who are specifically to be rejected are as follows:

Those who revile the guru, feel anger toward their spiritual siblings,
 violate the bounds of what is secret and proclaim it publicly,
 have no faith, are avaricious, are of ignoble character,
 and fixate on things of this life—keep what is secret from them.

People who have developed certain faults are unsuitable candidates. Such faults include having no respect for their guru or spiritual brothers and sisters, and viewing them wrongly; proclaiming secrets and teaching them publicly; having no faith and being very avaricious; and being of ignoble character and investing the confused perceptions of this life with true existence. One should not teach them, because they will become enemies of their spiritual masters and of the teachings concerning the heart essence. *Naturally Arising Awareness* states:

Showing no honor or esteem,
 behaving in ways that violate the secret mantra approach,
 having no spiritual affinity and no character,
 lacking sublime knowledge,
 disregarding the kindness of others,
 bragging about their family background,
 adorning their bodies ostentatiously,
 and acting in meaningless and undirected ways—
 they are not to be considered students, but rather the spiritual master's enemies.

Do not explain the ultimate meaning of the Great Perfection to individuals who will not put it into practice.

And *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

The wrong kinds of individuals—unsuitable candidates—
 take delight in fame and worldly matters,
 are proud, and so have no respect for what is sacred,
 become discouraged and give up,
 act unethically, do not rely on supports, and have no faith,
 are selfish and argumentative, covet dramatic methods
 of practice,

disseminate the teachings publicly, are disharmonious, and cultivate ill will by promoting themselves and denigrating others.

One should not teach them, but rather be extremely secretive.

The candidates who are to be accepted are as follows:

Fortunate people of the very highest caliber are candidates for the Great Perfection.

Teach it to them, for they respect the guru, have sublime knowledge in abundance, are spacious and forbearing, have a great capacity for generosity, have little attraction to dualistic thinking,¹ have given up concerns with this life, strive to attain enlightenment, have faith and diligence, and can maintain secrecy.

People with certain qualities are suitable candidates. Such qualities include having faith in their guru, the teachings, and their spiritual brothers and sisters; strong devotion and a great capacity for generosity; sublime knowledge on a vast scale; a spacious disposition; purity of character; few fixations; few notions about gaining freedom through purity or clinging to ritual purification; great diligence; and the ability to maintain secrecy. One should teach them. *Naturally Arising Awareness* states:

Having strong faith, great diligence, and sublime knowing in abundance, without clinging and attachment, showing great respect, engaging in the conduct of secret mantra, without discursiveness or distraction of mind, upholding samaya and being diligent in spiritual practice, embodying constant and deeply felt affection, engaging in lucid and stable meditation, acting in accord with the words of the teacher, not lapsing into breaches of samaya, behaving in harmony with others, purifying the mind through devotion, taking each word taught to heart and thus acting in their own best spiritual interests,

worthy of being entrusted with secrets,
 never transgressing the ultimate meaning of vajra nature,
 relying upon individuals of great learning,
 never going against their own best spiritual interests,
 speaking gently without arrogant words,
 acting in harmony with the minds of others,
 considering the teacher and the Tathagata to be one,
 without distinction—
 these are the characteristics of students.
 Such students are said to be candidates for the Great Perfection.

And *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

With faith, samaya, great diligence, compassion, and joy,
 without discouragement or idle speculation,
 without any attachment whatsoever to their physical bodies,
 children, spouses, servants, or possessions,
 but rather offering these faithfully and joyfully—
 these are the signs of faith and samaya of those
 upon whom I bestow that which conveys the quintessential
 meaning.

Students should behave as follows:

For their part, they please the guru with gifts²
 and, having already committed themselves, make
 a wholehearted request.
 Once this has been granted, they will practice appropriately
 and reach resolution on the level of the way of abiding.

Before requesting this heart essence, students who are suitable candidates first please the guru in many ways and then make their request, having committed themselves to the pursuit of spiritual practice. Once the guru has granted their request, they give up concerns with this life and carry out spiritual practice appropriately, using this present life to come to a decisive experience of samsara and nirvana. They will reach resolution—the way of abiding. As *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

“If I somehow obtain these teachings concerning the
 heart essence,

what will things of the world matter to me?
 And if I obtain them, I will undertake any difficulty!"
 Grant teachings to those who thoroughly uphold
 this commitment.

The usual process by which this comes about is for students (who themselves do not yet have realization) to honor a guru. Desiring only spiritual teachings, they constantly reflect on the positive qualities of the guru and the teachings. The guru, moreover, continually cares for students with compassion and advises them in a timely manner, nurturing them as though raising children. With unflagging resolve, a teacher and a student regard one another with constant affection. *The Reverberation of Sound* states:

To the vajra master who confers pith instructions,
 one should offer one's uncles, one's father and mother,
 one's eyes, one's jewels, one's children, and the very best
 of one's possessions—
 whatever is cherished and valued.

And *Naturally Arising Awareness* states:

Thus, the vajra master who confers pith instructions
 should be served with one's own body, precious things,
 and whatever is extremely rare.

And *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

In brief, one should offer even one's body and life force,
 to say nothing of possessions, property, and noble mounts.
 Even if they do not need these themselves,
 holy ones will accept them and offer them to the Three Jewels.

And *Naturally Arising Awareness* states:

The bond of innate compassion is not cut,
 nor is the bond of ongoing affection interrupted—
 this is the connection between spiritual master and student.

The Guru Who Instructs

The qualifications of a guru who imparts these instructions are as follows:

Moreover, the guru, who has heard many teachings and perfected positive qualities, . . .

In general, spiritual masters of the vajra pinnacle of secret mantra have heard many teachings, have great compassion, have received a complete transmission of empowerment and samaya, and have ripened themselves within the ordinary disciplines of development and completion, and so have the ability to free others.

In particular, gurus of the Great Perfection have, in addition, received empowerment into the definitive supreme secret, uphold pure samaya, and are learned in the meaning found in the tantras, explanatory commentaries, and pith instructions. They themselves have attained resolution in the spacelike total purity of view and meditation, and so have the ability to bring others to complete happiness.

In brief, they possess a treasure of positive qualities that never falter, like the emblem adorning a victory banner. *Naturally Arising Awareness* states:

Masters who have realized the vajra meaning
are of noble character, are skilled in teaching,
have received empowerment, are deeply involved in the ultimate
meaning of the secret mantra approach,
know all outer and inner ritual activities,
are in union with the chosen deity (beyond uniting with and then
separating from it),
are not distracted from meditative absorption,
are learned in the esoteric tantras of the secret mantra approach
that hold the meaning of the pith instructions of the
Great Perfection,
carry out all outer and inner methods of spiritual
accomplishment,
do not waver from the meaning of view,
and give up ordinary activities on outer, inner, and secret levels.
With positive qualities that are like precious gems,
they enjoy this inexhaustible treasure.

And *The Reverberation of Sound* states:

A guru who is completely qualified
is the source of all positive qualities
and provides the basis for perfect enlightenment.

The kind of guru who, by implication, is to be avoided is described in *Naturally Arising Awareness*:

Those who lack understanding, are very proud,
are foolish and caught up in verbiage,
are not intent upon the ultimate meaning of the
secret mantra approach,
disappoint others, speak arrogantly, follow erroneous paths,
have never beheld the mandalas of empowerment,
violate samaya, fail to respond to those who ask questions,
have heard few teachings, and have great pride—
these are not considered to be masters, but rather to have
a negative influence on students.
They are not masters who reveal the secret mantra approach,
nor are they capable of teaching ati, the Great Perfection.
Do not associate with them.

Thus, you should avoid them.

Instruction is imparted in the following way:

... examines all candidates,³ bestows the key points gradually
while keeping them very secret from those who are not
suitable candidates,
applies the seal of command, and strictly conceals these points
with the seal of trust.

The guru examines the student's suitability as a candidate and, as the student pursues spiritual practice over a period of months or years, grants the key points of the teachings gradually. To do so all at once would be a mistake because, if frivolous people who are not suitable candidates received them all at once, the teachings would be confounded and the blessings would fade. Even in the case of people who are suitable candidates, their practice would not ripen and their minds

would become jaded about the teachings. In his *Examination of the Key Points of Timeliness*, the master Padmasambhava states:

Not all at once, moreover, but gradually,
candidates are examined and instructions are given
in a thorough manner,
though these are kept hidden from those who are fixated
on this life.

If people are suitable candidates, they are devoted to the teachings and so request them with offerings and due honors. Although spiritual masters have no desire for material things, they know others by their actions. There is only one way to create auspicious interdependence; someone who is not a suitable candidate is not keenly motivated, but makes formal gestures only out of ambition. *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

Having been examined previously, devoted candidates make
their request
with fine and precious things, so that their faith can be
determined.

The all-creating monarch is not to be revealed
to those with avaricious minds, pride, or inconsistent altruism.

Therefore, suitable candidates are taught, while secrecy is maintained toward those who are not suitable, as *Naturally Arising Awareness* states:

The ultimate meaning of the Great Perfection approach
of pith instructions
is not to be poured into common and inferior vessels.
If the quintessence intended for the few with faith is poured
into inferior vessels,
no quintessence will result, only ruination for all.
Therefore, keep this secret from those with inferior minds.

As for the way in which secrecy is kept, my advice is not to consider teaching this profound approach to those with inferior minds. Do not speak a word of it aloud to them. Do not put these texts into their hands. Enjoin on those who are suitable candidates the seal of

secrecy concerning those who are unsuitable. With the seal of trust concerning these teachings, instruct suitable candidates to keep them strictly concealed.

The Instructions Imparted

The heart essence of what is imparted is shown as follows:

Teachings on the heart essence of definitive meaning are entrusted to fortunate heart children of the very highest caliber.

There are two considerations here, the actual teachings and those to whom they are entrusted. The first is the manner in which awareness—awakened mind—is shown to be beyond causality and deliberate effort. This involves two steps, reaching the definitive conclusion through view and continuing within this context through enlightened intent.

To begin with, regardless of what appears in light of awareness, it does not waver from that awareness and is neither beneficial nor harmful. Transcending causes and effects, whether positive or negative, this constitutes a supreme and unobstructed state of unique perfection. *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

Nonconceptual space is dharmakaya.
 I am nonconceptual, neither accepting nor rejecting.
 The absence of acceptance and rejection is like space.
 Just as space does not accept or reject,
 Samantabhadra does not accept or reject.
 Acceptance and rejection are absent in me.

The same source states that the essence has nothing to do with causality:

Enlightenment is of the nature of space—
 space has nothing to do with causality.

And *The Perfect Dynamic Energy of the Lion* states:

The ultimate meaning of buddhahood is not realized through positive actions,
 for if the meaning of buddhahood were realized through such actions,

the great perfection, the way of abiding, would be false.
 Falling into samsara does not happen as a result of
 negative actions,
 for if falling into samsara happened as a result of such actions,
 naturally occurring timeless awareness would be false.

To resolve the quandary this poses: In lower spiritual approaches, it is taught that positive and negative actions do exist. Because one fails to realize the ultimate and genuine nature of these actions and fixates on them as though they really existed, they appear, out of confusion, to be positive or negative. But in fundamentally unconditioned awakened mind, there is no virtue or harm. Likewise, regardless of what confused perceptions arise for someone stricken with a virulent fever, in actuality they do not exist.

The metaphor of a phenomenon that comes into being and ceases does not apply to what is unborn; for example, the metaphor of a seedling that grows from a seed does not apply to space. Likewise, one should understand that the metaphors for confused experiences based on causality do not apply to the ultimate essence, the nature of mind. *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

Because the great perfection is timelessly beyond causality,
 the state in which nothing need be done is not accomplished
 by being sought or achieved.

Teachers who view things in terms of causality issue
 pronouncements.

They take mundane phenomena with ordinary characteristics
 as their standard
 and rely on causality in trying to accomplish results.
 There are no causes, only mind, and so there are never
 any results.

Because awakened mind is unborn,
 do not take the phenomena experienced by worldly people
 as its metaphor
 and misinterpret it as something that comes into being
 and then decays.

Without realizing that it occurs naturally, beyond causality,
 they take mundane phenomena with ordinary characteristics
 as their standard
 and rely upon causes, claiming that results occur from them.

Such is the natural transmission of spiritual approaches based
on causes and results.

Listen, O great and courageous being!

Timeless awareness—what is termed “timeless awareness”—
is naturally occurring timeless awareness, unceasing and
in harmony with everything.

Not dependent on causes, this incomparable timeless awareness
gives rise to everything, and there is no other source
of phenomena.

To take mundane phenomena, whether causes or effects,
as the standard—

such seeking will not bring about what has never existed
as a result.

Because awakened mind is not created by causes,
do not take mundane phenomena, which come into being
and cease, as the standard.

Because awakened mind is not created by conditions,
do not take mundane phenomena, which come into being
and cease, as its metaphors.

O great and courageous one,
if one strives in meditation and other spiritual practice,
desiring something great,

this greatness will not be achieved through such effort.

Such greatness is and has always been naturally occurring
timeless awareness.

There is no need to try to achieve buddhahood according to ordinary approaches based on causes and results. All approaches accept that the fruition is dharmakaya—noncomposite, never brought about by achievement. If it could be brought about by achievement, it would therefore be composite and, in turn, impermanent. Rather, it comes about through resting without contrivance, just so: the enlightened intents of all buddhas of the three times are in accord on this point. From the same source:

Buddhahood is not brought about by achievement.

It need not be sought and is naturally indwelling,
and so spontaneously present.

Rest nonconceptually in this unsought and naturally
indwelling state.

The same source continues:

All buddhas of the three times, moreover, are none other than awakened mind.

Buddhas of previous generations gained realization in the past by seeing the uncontrived natural mind.

Buddhas now present have gained realization of this uncontrived natural mind,

without contrivance, just as it is,

and so are now bringing benefit to ordinary beings.

For buddhas who have yet to appear,

this naturally occurring state, the nature of mind,

has not been proclaimed to be contrived,

nor is this precious mind contrived at present.

They will appear having followed the path of noncontrivance.

Regardless of how phenomena manifest,

they are not realized to be awakened mind.

They are not brought about by contrivance or achievement,

but in the absence of realization, attempts are made to bring

something about by contrivance.

Although many eons pass, one will not encounter effortless bliss.

Ah! Because the three kayas are not contrived by ordinary mind,

even though reference to deliberate contrivance is found

in the sutra scriptures of the Teacher who demonstrates

the three kayas,

in these cases the Teacher was not revealing the nature

of the three kayas.

Likewise, in whatever ways the Teacher taught deliberate

contrivance to be true,

these are not definitive quotations, but rather provisional ones.

As for continuing within this context through enlightened intent, awareness—naked dharmakaya, the unique state beyond causes and effects (whether positive or negative), the ultimate meaning of the resolution of phenomena that is beyond ordinary consciousness—thus rests imperturbably in its own place, without thought, without reflection. When this occurs, it is vivid in its natural lucidity, all-encompassing in its empty lucidity, and uniform in its timeless lucidity. Uncontrived and undistorted within that context, it is a state of

equilibrium in utter relaxation, brilliance that is naturally pristine, ease in natural freedom, vividness in natural purity, relaxation in the natural place of rest, and wide-open clarity in the unfettered and natural expansiveness of the five senses.

Within the spacious expanse of openness, the continuity of ordinary consciousness through the three times is cut through, and so one rests in a state of equilibrium within naked lucidity, which is unceasing and nonconceptual. *Samantabhadra: Mirror of Enlightened Mind* states:

Lucid and undistracted, difficult to fathom—
expanding⁴ into this state, empty yet lucid, one enjoys
the basic space of supreme bliss.

This lucid state of one-pointedness⁵ is the realm of ultimate
basic space.

The Pearl Garland states:

Empty yet lucid, lucid and pervasive,
uncorrupted by ordinary thought, unencumbered
by recollection,
free of elaboration,
pervasive and empty like space,
naturally pure, free of all designations, . . .

The Six Expanses states:

Self-knowing awareness is accompanied by an equal measure
of emptiness.

Owing to the great fortune of being familiar with this,
one attains the enlightened dimension of nonconceptuality.
Attaining the radiance of my responsiveness,
one shares equal fortune with me.

The Blazing Lamp states:

Without naturally manifest appearances ceasing,
all attention that reifies things⁶ comes to an end.
Within the basic space of naturally pure appearances,
there is discernment of unwavering evenness in
nonconceptual awareness.

Within the basic space of the equalness of everything, moreover,
 with this timeless resolution of discursive thought
 there is abiding in basic space that is totally pure by nature.
 Without dualistically labeling and characterizing apparent
 phenomena,
 there is abiding in the context of supreme natural relaxation
 within basic space that cannot be divided into outer and inner.
 With an infinite scope that cannot be so divided,
 there is timeless abiding, unobscured and without distortion,
 as the quality of totally pure basic space
 in supreme and timeless original purity.

The Conjunction of the Sun and Moon states:

In realizing natural great perfection,
 whoever is thus familiar with it discovers its implications
 by resting, not seeking.
 Supreme bliss unfolds without being cultivated in meditation.
 There is direct awareness in the nature itself.
 Those who encounter this, even if they have committed harmful
 acts with immediate consequences,
 will be freed by cultivating it in meditation.
 Of this there is no doubt—I swear it!

The Perfect Dynamic Energy of the Lion states:

The nature of phenomena, which entails no reification
 or attachment, has no substance.
 It is the sublime, nondualistic enlightened intent of buddhas.
 The nature of phenomena, which entails no deliberate effort,
 is pure in its own place.
 All-encompassing meditative absorption enters the domain
 of the nature of phenomena.

And The Array of Inset Gems states:

In its timeless original purity—the quality of space—
 dharmakaya itself has no substance and entails no deliberation.
 In supreme spaciousness that cannot be divided into outer
 and inner,

the spacious nature of phenomena is free of limits and has no substance.

These quotations are concerned with the very essence, which is naturally lucid, evoked without mental laxity or agitation. An open spaciousness unaffected by any antidote, it is pure, without division between outer and inner, and so is free of any flaws of error, obscuration, or extreme. *The Reverberation of Sound* states:

In meditation that constitutes uncultivated abiding,
the avenues of the senses are lucid, though conceptual mind
does not engage in thought.

Mind that reflects on awareness itself is such that it is not lost
to outer phenomena.

There is no fragmentation, or isolation in emptiness,
or interruption of the continuity of bliss,
or impartiality that becomes apathy,
or contrived relaxation in the lucidity of consciousness,
or empty paths of training that are repudiated or interrupted,
or fixation on the arousal of inner bliss,
or reification of lucid manifestations,
or manipulation of visualized colors and syllables.⁷

If one does not fall into such extremes,
meditation constitutes abiding without going astray.

Concerning the way in which the quality of meditation manifests,
this quality is awareness that is empty yet lucid,
unadulterated by its very nature.

The limitations of dualistic perception are resolved,
and the very essence of the nature of phenomena is pure.
Given the unconfused way in which this manifests,
since what is tangible and intangible is naturally pure
in the pure nature of causes and conditions,
fixation on the objects of the five senses is innately pure,
the coarse elements are innately pure,
and the increasing vision of pure timeless awareness
reveals itself.

Therein lies the nature of phenomena as resolution.

In this regard, with the shift to an empty and naturally pristine state, first the process of misconstruing the subtle and coarse elements as having identity is purified. Then, the meditative experience of

empty yet lucid timeless awareness intensifies, until finally the atoms of the subtle and coarse elements disperse and physical matter is purified like mist fading, whereupon awareness reaches the point of resolution in originally pure dharmakaya and is said to have "taken its own place." *The Heaped Jewels* states:

When there is resting in the natural state without concentration,
understanding manifests in each individual's mind,
without all the words concerning mind having to be taught
by anyone.

As one's mind becomes familiar with this,
all that is nonmanifest and all apparent phenomena,
which themselves entail no concepts, are naturally pure.

Thus everything, in an unobstructed way,
becomes a variation of the supreme simultaneity of emptiness
and lucidity.

Each of the four elements—earth, water, fire, and air—dissipates
into space like mist
without its respective potential actually taking form.
Regardless of the complexity with which fixation based
on confusion is experienced,
aspects of dualistic perception, in that they are unborn,
naturally cease, so that nothing manifests.

With this natural resolution, one's own illuminating experience
is similar for all other beings.

And *The Reverberation of Sound* states:

The scope of natural great perfection—
phenomena resting in their natural condition.⁸

Since the nature of apparent phenomena and knowing
is one of primordial union,
they meet in timeless freedom—imperturbable rest.
Enlightened intent is beyond ordinary consciousness.
Everything with characteristics is pure in its natural state.
There is freedom from the limitations of emptiness
and substance.
Mental stirring falls away—nonconceptuality.
Ordinary consciousness falls away—the transcendence
of conceptual mind.

There are two approaches: when the meaning of original purity is brought to its ultimate conclusion—in the approach known as “cutting through solidity”—the elements fall away; when spontaneous presence is brought to its ultimate conclusion—in the approach known as “making the quantum leap”—the elements are purified.

These two are alike only in that external and internal matter is purified. But there is the distinction of whether or not the so-called body of light is attained. In the approach of cutting through solidity, the smallest of the body’s particles disperse, and freedom instantly comes about in original purity, so that the body of light does not manifest. In the approach of making the quantum leap, the body of light is, quite simply, the factor that brings about the accomplishment of “supreme transference.” There is no distinction, however, regarding the way in which freedom comes about on the level of original purity.

Through such a majestic spiritual approach, one is capable of overwhelming everything with the splendor of one’s realization and coming to a decisive experience of causality in this life. In realizing the matrix that is the nature of phenomena without its being impaired, one immersed in genuine being gains an authentic degree of indwelling confidence and so conquers the confusion of causality. Lesser spiritual approaches are not relied upon, and theories of causality are not posited. This is because the outermost confines of one’s view have been thoroughly shattered and everything is understood to be naturally occurring timeless awareness.

The eight lower spiritual approaches are unable to make such claims, because they amount only to lesser approaches. *The Tantra of the Great and Perfect Dynamic Energy of the Lion* states:

How marvelous!

Timeless awareness as manifest appearance is supremely lucid.

Timeless awareness as interdependence is free of bias.

The secret timeless awareness of great perfection is, it turns out,
the pinnacle of everything.

To illustrate the view of great perfection with a metaphor,
it is similar to a great garuda soaring in space.

Despite the multiplicity of terms specific to individual spiritual
approaches,

the lion does not bark like the fox, for his belly is vast;

the fox and monkey cannot roar like the lion, for their throats are narrow.

The language specific to the Great Perfection reveals self-knowing timeless awareness.

As for addressing self-knowing awareness, the lower approaches are forever inferior in their view.

In this regard, one might think that just as a garuda first takes flight from the top of a cliff, so we must attain higher levels by relying on lower ones, after which we can proceed without deliberate effort, as though soaring in space. But this is not so. Although we can allow that it is possible for some who refine their acumen, here we are using as a metaphor the garuda's soaring in space, rather than every moment in the garuda's life. A metaphor illustrates in only a partial way; it is not suitable for illustrating everything. Were it so suited, it would be the underlying meaning and not a metaphor.

In one way, since there are different degrees of acumen among gods, humans, and other beings, the Great Perfection is the teaching for those whose acumen has always been singularly self-sufficient; it is not the province of those with inferior acumen. It is for this reason that *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

The degrees of acumen among gods, humans, and other beings are not identical.

Some have the forceful momentum derived from refining their acumen,

while some have acumen that has always been singularly self-sufficient.

Therefore, select topics are taught.

This is similar to the ordinary spiritual approach found in *The Treasury of Higher Teachings*, which states:

Some are of this type from the start,
while others become that way through refinement.

This chapter is included as a summary and elucidation of the preceding four. My general discussion of the Great Perfection approach is like a four-story treasury of precious jewels, and the first four topics

are like four keys. The present topic is like a master key that provides access to the other keys, which are hidden within this treasury.

Concerning those to whom these teachings are to be entrusted, there are two types of candidates for the heart essence of definitive meaning, the general and specific types. Regarding the general type, *The Great Garuda* states:

Easygoing, as forthright as an innocent, of carefree mind,
uncomplicated people with spacious minds undertake this.

As for the specific type of candidates, *The Array of Inset Gems* states:

“O accomplished conqueror Vajradhara,
this secret meaning of the pith instructions of the Great Perfection
approach is not revealed capriciously.
I pray, speak of the class, eminent conduct,
complexion, and characteristics that define the individuals
to whom this foremost of majestic transmissions of definitive
truth may be taught.”

Then the accomplished conqueror Vajradhara
arose from meditative absorption
and proclaimed the following to the distinguished retinue:

“O distinguished retinue gathered here, listen!

I am teaching, so listen well.

The different classes are as follows:

There is the warrior class, the priestly class,
likewise the great merchant class,
and the most unique class.

To these, it is said, the definitive meaning of the secret mantra
approach is revealed.

Alternatively, without concern for class, examine complexion.

Regardless of whether they are men or women,
those with the following complexion and characteristics
are said to be candidates for the Great Perfection:

powerful limbs, dark complexion,
even, white, and rounded teeth,
slightly bloodshot eyes,
hair of great quality, dark brown and curling clockwise,
a body with small hips,

unpretentious, speaking forthrightly or echoing all the words
spoken by another—
these people speak in such ways.

It is said that they are taught the instructions of the
Great Perfection.

If all these qualities are complete in a person,
even though a butcher, prostitute, or sweeper, regardless of how
low a class—

grant everything, holding nothing back.

This pith instruction on the three quintessential secrets
is the skillful means for examining class and complexion.

In the wake of my nirvana,

I have revealed this quintessential distillation
of secret pith instructions, this most majestic and definitive truth.
You should teach the preceding instructions
to people who meet these criteria."

How Instruction Is Imparted

Those who are entrusted gain accomplishment as follows:

They, in turn, do not disseminate this infallible ultimate
heart essence to everyone,

but hold it to be their own infallible heart essence.⁹

If the bounds of secrecy are violated, the injunction is broken
and, owing to misinterpretation, the teachings on the heart
essence will disappear.

Therefore, maintain their secrecy and assimilate them
in a peaceful and happy frame of mind.¹⁰

Dharmakaya, a majestic state of authentic being, will be gained
in this lifetime.¹¹

Truly worthy students—people to whom these teachings have been
imparted—do not in turn disseminate them to unsuitable candidates,
but teach them to those who are suitable. In particular, they do not
speak of them upwind of those who are unsuitable; even when teach-
ing suitable candidates, they do so only gradually, having determined
their suitability.

Specifically, when they find trustworthy candidates for these teach-
ings, they teach them gradually, yet without being miserly, teaching

while holding nothing back. They enjoin upon them the seals of secrecy and entrustment and advise them, "Hold the heart essence of the teachings so that it does not disappear!"

Since these teachings are not shared with unsuitable candidates, no misinterpretation will result, so they will not accumulate the karma of repudiating the teachings. Taught to those who are suitable, the heart essence of the teachings will endure for a long time in this world, enabling those with the appropriate karma to find liberation from samsara and awaken to buddhahood in a single lifetime.

In this regard, if unsuitable candidates are taught, a flaw is incurred that will harm both oneself and others, as *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

Should one fail to abide by what to accept and reject about
the ultimate meaning of the heart essence,
nonhuman entities and spirits will create obstacles,
and powerful dakas and dakinis will bring untimely death
and frightening consequences to both oneself and others.

Owing to misinterpretation, the spiritual approach
of the heart essence will disappear.

Therefore, one should avoid inferior kinds of individuals.

The same source also advises teaching candidates who qualify as suitable:

To free them from worldly clinging and examine their character,
the guru accepts everything, their bodies and wealth.
As for whether or not they are capable,
if they show special signs they are taught the ultimate meaning
of the heart essence—
to them is granted the all-creating monarch.

In particular, the same source speaks of entrusting the teachings to those with supreme good fortune:

This is the oral lineage deriving from the transmission
of this discourse.

The all-creating monarch is certainly entrusted to you
who hold the heart essence without disseminating it
or allowing it to disappear.

The Benefits and Advantages of Instruction

Once one has requested teachings on the true meaning of natural great perfection, the benefits and advantages of being instructed are worthy of praise. Students with such supreme good fortune delight their holy guru with respect and honors. Having requested teachings on the meaning of natural great perfection, if they implement them in spiritual practice, all that is excellent will be ensured in this and future lifetimes. *The Great Fundamental Tantra of the Reverberation of Sound* addresses this at some length:

When both principal and secondary gurus meet all of the
 respective qualifications,
 serve them with your empire, body, retinue, and wealth.
 Delighting them with your actions and speech,
 rely upon gurus in whom buddhas unite equally.
 With faith, sublime knowing, devotion, a lack of confusion,
 an absence of errors or mistakes concerning what is discussed,
 and clear faculties, rely upon gurus.
 The positive qualities of such reliance
 are similar to those of the wish-granting tree, the wish-fulfilling
 gem, and the wish-granting cow:
 you will gain immeasurable positive qualities.
 Taking this into consideration, rely upon gurus
 because you will win the battle against samsara.



The supreme secret—the ultimate import of the vajra pinnacle—is atiyoga, the basic space of spontaneous presence.

The manner in which this is imparted, by whom and to whom, has been explained in this precious commentary that analyzes the fifth topic.

Throughout immeasurable time, with enormous waves
 of innate compassion,
 hosts of gurus, chosen deities, and dakinis,
 powerful ones who delight in these teachings,
 and oath-bound guardians—rejoice in this!
 With innate compassion, buddhas influence gods, humans,
 and other beings

in unsurpassable and excellent ways, arousing in them
consummate devotion and virtue.
As heirs of those who reach the state of bliss,
they in turn penetrate to the heart essence of the supreme spiritual
approach.
All who do so, rejoice in this from this day forward!

From *The Precious Treasury of the Way of Abiding*, this is the commentary on the fifth vajra topic, reaching the definitive conclusion concerning the types of individuals to whom these teachings may be imparted.

6

Conclusion

Now, there are four stages to this conclusion, which completes this treatise: dedication prayers for supreme and total freedom from the three realms, dedication prayers for the dissemination and flourishing of the teachings throughout the ten directions, the account of who authored this treatise and how it is structured, and the arousal of joy in fortunate people of future generations.

Dedication Prayers for Freedom from the Three Realms

The first stage is as follows:

These teachings thus make¹ fully evident the ultimate meaning of the sublimely secret great perfection, so that it is no longer elusive.

May they free all beings without exception, effortlessly and naturally, within primordial basic space as the ground of being.²

In effect, this says: The blazing lamp of this unsurpassable method reveals itself and illuminates like the unobscured orb of the sun. With this, may the many beings in the three realms realize the nature of their minds—naturally occurring timeless awareness—to be perfect as ati, the supreme state of natural rest, without anyone making any effort whatsoever. May they become holy and venerable masters of the indwelling greatness of Samantabhadra! *The Six Expanses* states:

Within the nature of mind, which is there to be seen,
 the world of appearances and possibilities arises naturally
 in oneness,
 so the freedom of the three realms in their own place
 is perfect in ati, the supreme state of natural rest.

Dedication Prayers for the Teachings

The dedication prayers for the dissemination and flourishing of the teachings are as follows:

These teachings, which thoroughly shatter the furthest reaches
 of one's view,
 are the very pinnacle of spiritual approaches—the basic space
 of the great and majestic garuda,
 the transmission of atiyoga, exalted above all.
 May this victory banner never fall, but unfold throughout
 the ten directions.

Just as the garuda soaring in space cuts directly across the earth in its flight, so atiyoga—natural great perfection—thoroughly cuts through the outermost confines of all views. It is beyond all constructs, all analysis or synthesis, as *The All-Creating Monarch* states:

Like the great garuda soaring in space,
 there is no elaboration, no simplification.

The very pinnacle of all spiritual approaches is like the summit of the most majestic of mountains, as is stated in *The Natural Freedom That Underlies Characteristics*:

The transmission of atiyoga, the very pinnacle of all
 spiritual approaches,
 is the highest point of all, like a majestic mountain.
 The greatest of the great, the spacious mind of Samantabhadra,
 overwhelms lower approaches with its own power.

The implications are: “May the presentation of such an approach, like the emblem adorning the pinnacle of a precious victory banner, never disappear, but spread and flourish throughout the ten directions.”

Author and Structure

The following shows who authored this treatise and how it is structured:

Completely embraced within three categories, nine expanses,
and four themes,
the definitive meaning is found in sixteen topics of teachings.
This detailed explanation, *The Precious Treasury of the Way
of Abiding*,
was composed in an excellent manner by the good
Longchen Rabjam.

If we summarize all topics of teaching concerning natural great perfection, they can be encompassed within the three categories of Mind, Expanse, and Direct Transmission.

They can also be encompassed within the so-called nine expanses: the expanse of original purity as the essence; the expanse of spontaneous presence as the nature; the expanse within which anything that arises does so ceaselessly; the expanse free of the contrivance of causality; the expanse of the innate purity of error and obscuration within the ground of being; the expanse of the primordial purity of view and meditation; the expanse free of contrivance and contamination, free of anything needing to be done; the expanse of uninterrupted enlightened intent; and the expanse in which phenomena are free in their own place.

These are also encompassed within four themes, that is, embraced within the four unchanging themes of the ultimate heart essence—ineffability, openness, spontaneous presence, and oneness. Each of these four themes is dealt with under four headings—revealing the key point, discerning the implications, embracing the larger scope, and coming to the decisive experience. This presentation of sixteen topics of teaching is arranged so as to reveal the definitive meaning directly. Since this treatise provides all that is wished for, like a treasure house of precious jewels, I call it the detailed explanation of *The Precious Treasury of the Way of Abiding*, a title that reflects the converging of the metaphor and its underlying meaning.

The words “by Longchen Rabjam, one immersed in genuine being through the most majestic spiritual approach,” refer to the name of the author because, regarding the ultimate meaning of the nature of

phenomena, his view and meditation are infinitely spacious like the sky. The words “was composed in an excellent manner” show that this is to benefit beings of future generations, incorporating the most majestic of pith instructions, superior to all others. In revealing the very essence, just as it is—the enlightened intent of ati—this triumphs over the reification of limits found in lower spiritual approaches and overwhelms them with its splendor, so it is referred to as “the ultimate heart essence, the great vajra hammer.” *Overwhelming the Six Modes of Consciousness with Splendor* states:

The basic space of phenomena, without origination or cessation
in the three times,
is an unchanging, indivisible, and unformed expanse.
Since it triumphs over all limitations, it is the great
vajra hammer.

This is the most majestic of pith instructions, overwhelming
all extremes with its splendor.

Arousing Joy

The following will arouse joy in fortunate people of future generations:

The definitive meaning, the five chapters of this “treasure house
of the way of abiding,”
is well adorned with a wealth both vast and profound.
May this³ treatise, made lovely by a vivid array of words
and meanings, bring joy to hosts of fortunate people.

The treasure house of a universal monarch, one who is completely victorious in all four directions, is replete with immeasurable wealth and adorned with an absolutely splendid array of elegance. Likewise, this spontaneously present treasure house of the vajra pinnacle is structured with its five definitive topics clearly laid out as distinct levels. Within, it is replete with the superb wealth of profound and extensive meaning, and is made extremely lovely by an elegant array of words and meanings.

This, in effect, says, “I advise hosts of fortunate people in future generations to use, as the basis for all their conduct, this treatise,

which has been arranged as an inexhaustible and precious treasure. May it bring them true joy." This concludes the text by adorning it with auspicious wishes, providing the interdependence to ensure that those who have entered into the true spirit of this most majestic of spiritual approaches will have superb samaya, and that these teachings will endure for a long time. In this regard, adornment with such wishes ensures auspiciousness, virtue, and excellence in every way. *The Web of Magical Display of Manjushri* states this well:

Auspiciousness, universal auspiciousness!
The auspiciousness proclaimed brings the good fortune of fame.

Concluding Verses

Through the thousand lights of benefit and happiness from the sun of auspiciousness,
in all directions there is auspiciousness, dispelling the darkness of the four continents.

The profound meaning of this auspiciousness, marvelous and superb,
reveals the vision of the auspicious, sacred teachings to the many kinds of beings.

Within the open basic space of auspiciousness, the massed clouds of nectar

send down a continuous rain of many auspicious desirables.

The progression of this spiritual approach—the pinnacle of auspiciousness—

lets fall the great auspicious downpour that is manifest enlightenment.

Therefore, here is *The Precious Treasury of the Way of Abiding*, a treasury of auspicious bliss and excellence equal to the limits of space,

profound and extensive, the quintessential meaning of the sublime spiritual approach,

the precious treasury that gives rise to all that fortunate ones wish for.

This process is one in which the thousand illuminating lights of intelligence

shine in the spacious sky of the knowable,

distilling the essential elixir of the tantras, commentaries,
and instructions.

It was composed in an excellent manner on the slope of the
snow mountain Tökar.

Through the rays of innate compassion of holy ones
and my own not insignificant powers of discriminating
intelligence,

I gained mastery over the vast and profound topics
of knowledge,

and my intelligence unfolded naturally through this process.

The pinnacle of spiritual approaches, natural great perfection,
the haven of those with great good fortune in this human world,
has become manifest owing to the grace of holy masters
in the sublime lands of India, China, and Tibet.

Supremely learned and accomplished masters, in their
individual traditions,

composed commentaries on the enlightened intent
of the teachings—

the profound and extensive pith instructions.

Sacred traditions of spiritual development were defined
over time,

firmly planting the victory banner that never falls—
the teachings of victorious ones.

Thus did the transmission proceed in stages until, relying
upon these marvelous topics

and the blessings of incomparable gurus,

I composed this *Treasury of the Way of Abiding*, an exposition
on the meaning

of all these vajra topics of natural great perfection without
exception.

Since these vajra topics are, moreover, extremely difficult
to fathom,

it has not been my experience to perceive them inwardly,
nor does my capability lie in a mastery of words.

Still, I have explained them thoroughly by relying
upon holy masters.

Just as a creeping vine, supported by a palm tree,
attains great heights and makes it lovely,
so through the tantras, commentaries, and instructions,
as well as the blessings of the gurus,

I have rendered these profound and extensive topics beautifully.
 The noble embodiment of intelligence spreads its wings
 of realization,
 exquisite in the pure sky of utter lucidity—
 meditative absorption.

With the arousal of the dynamic energy of enlightened intent—
 naturally occurring timeless awareness—
 the abyss of samsara is truly crossed in basic space.
 From the confines of the egg of unbiased study
 and contemplation
 hatches the bird of the Great Perfection, most majestic
 of spiritual approaches.

Spreading its wings—perfecting the supreme dynamic energy
 of meditative experience and realization—
 it soars in the basic space overarching everything.
 Moreover, the confining shell of body, speech, and mind
 is shattered.

This simultaneity of awareness and emptiness, dharmakaya,
 is spaciously empty yet lucid.

This resolution in the basic space of phenomena is unobstructed.
 This unity of everything in basic space is directly experienced.
 Accordingly, within the nature of the sky, a spacious state
 of equilibrium,
 everything is blended without interruption as one in the naked
 simultaneity of awareness and emptiness.

Outer and inner are a single basic space, empty yet lucid, without
 transition or change.

Ongoing authentic being, majestic dharmakaya, is surely gained.
 The transmission that defines with certainty the most sublime
 way of immersion in genuine being within this lifetime
 was revealed by one with an ordinary physical body but the
 enlightened intent of a victorious one,
 who did not entertain concepts about originally pure
 dharmakaya—
 a lion among human beings, who then passed into nirvana.

Within timelessly empty basic space is a supremely expansive
 state devoid of ordinary consciousness.
 Based upon the blissful ground of being, the conscious mind
 is uninterrupted content.

Within the basic space in which phenomena are resolved,
 the falling away of ordinary consciousness is joyous.
 Immersion in genuine being, the entire vast range of space—
 how marvelous!

The natural place of rest, dharmakaya, is nonconceptual
 and spacious like the sky.
 Natural meditative stability is uninterrupted like the flow
 of a river.
 With a single realization, all levels and paths without exception
 are traversed.
 Ultimate and wholly positive enlightened intent—
 how marvelous!

In the pure sky of naturally occurring timeless awareness
 soars the great garuda of realization, of immersion in genuine
 being free of anything needing to be done.
 Ineffability, openness, spontaneous presence, and oneness—
 the uncontrived ultimate heart essence—how marvelous!

Within this vast expanse of awareness that is naturally manifest
 and spontaneously present,
 regardless of what manifests, it is the unceasing dynamic energy
 of that awareness,
 clearly apparent yet ineffable, simply the illusory display.
 Supreme emptiness endowed with all qualities—how marvelous!

In this unwavering intent of victorious ones, just as it is,
 the realm of evenness—natural arising, natural freedom,
 natural abiding—
 is blissful, lucid, nonconceptual, spacious without limit or center.
 Enlightened intent that transcends breaches in meditation—
 how marvelous!

Awareness, empty yet lucid, is unchanging dharmakaya.
 Samsara and nirvana are timelessly pure within the enlightened
 expanse of self-knowing awareness.
 Dualistic perception, naturally manifest yet groundless,
 is the dynamic energy of dharmakaya.
 Realization beyond characterization or description—
 how marvelous!

If samsara is realized to be without basis, this is nirvana.

If nirvana is realized to be merely a label, this is primordial basic space.

If there is freedom from anything to be done—transcendence of conceptual mind—this is dharmakaya.

If one rests just so, without thinking, thought and description are transcended.

If there is no fixation on constructs, this is the way of abiding.

If there is resolution of phenomena—transcendence of ordinary consciousness—

this is the consummation of what is ultimately meaningful.

If there is transcendence of the extremes of “is” and “is not,” this is freedom from limitations.

If the root of hope and fear is cut through, enlightenment is discovered.

This is the consummate and definitive heart essence.

In advising those of good fortune in future generations, ensure that all those fortunate ones who follow you and others gain ongoing authentic being on the level of resolution.

Natural great perfection is vajra basic space.

Whoever encounters this receives the most excellent and definitive transmission.

Effortless and totally free, the nature of phenomena is a spacious expanse.

This is truly the precious samaya that brings conditioned existence to an end.

Therefore, fortunate people who have embarked on this approach,

rejoice and rest in the uncontrived, genuine nature.

Renounce worldly confusion and the phenomena that result from conceptual elaboration.

In a solitary place, look to the heart essence, in which nothing need be done.

This is, in truth, my profound and heartfelt advice.

Be scrupulous in your examination, and realization will awaken in your mind.

Maintain no fixation, and the confusion that reifies things will be destroyed.

Act without a specific point of reference, and the lack of true existence will become apparent as a matter of course.

Whatever manifests as objects, whatever arises in the mind, the key point of these phenomena

is the state of evenness—utter relaxation, with neither suppression nor indulgence.

Abandon yourself in imperturbable rest, for this is the very consummation of enlightened intent.

The arising of the naturally pristine state in which no traces are left leads one to the point of resolution.

Thus, the quintessential meaning that underlies all phenomena without exception

is explained in this commentary on *The Precious Treasury of the Way of Abiding*.

May the teachings of victorious ones spread and flourish, and may there be auspiciousness, bliss, and excellence in all directions and times!

This concludes the commentary on *The Precious Treasury of the Way of Abiding*, composed in the noble mansion of Samantabhadra on the slopes of the snow mountain Tökar by Longchen Rabjam, one immersed in genuine being, who has gained mastery over the topics of the most majestic of spiritual approaches, being rich in the wealth of having heard the entire range of the sublime speech of those who have arrived at a state of bliss.

Good fortune! Good fortune! Good fortune!

Notes

These notes serve three purposes. First, wherever we found what we felt were misspellings or ambiguous readings, we brought them to the attention of one or more of the scholars consulted on this translation. We then rendered these words in the way we thought best reflected the intended meaning and identified our decisions in the notes.

Second, Longchen Rabjam quotes from traditional sources to support his arguments. In particular, he cites extensively many of the seventeen tantras that comprise the scriptural basis for the Category of Direct Transmission in the Great Perfection approach. Occasionally, the version of a passage that he cites differs from the text of the source currently available to us. Although the original source and Longchen Rabjam's citation are both clear and meaningful, we chose the version that seemed more pertinent to the context. Again, we identified such choices in the notes.

We referenced the edition of these tantras that was printed at Adzom Chögar in eastern Tibet. We wish to acknowledge the enormous benefit we derived from the work of Mr. James Valby, who had previously transcribed the texts of these tantras in the Wylie system of transliteration, making our search for such variant passages much easier.

Third, there are a number of places where Longchen Rabjam's source verses differ from his citation of those verses in the commentary. Once again, we chose the version we thought best reflected the intended meaning and identified our choice in the notes. In some instances, we changed the commentary citation so that it was consistent with the source verse version; in others, we changed the source verses to match the commentary citation. In the latter case, we also changed the Tibetan text, and so in these places it differs from the source verse text that appears in the Adzom Chögar edition.

Chapter I

1. We assume that in this paragraph the two occurrences of the term *rig pa* (awareness) should be *rigs pa* (logical).
2. We have chosen the version in the Dergé edition, *rang gsal* (naturally lucid), rather than that in the Adzom Chögar edition, *ngang gsal* (innately lucid).
3. We assume that *rlung* (subtle energy) is a misspelling of *klong* (expanse), and in fact the revised Adzom Chögar edition has *klong*.
4. We have chosen the source verse version, *rig pa zang ka la* (within . . . awareness as such), rather than the commentary version, *rig pa zang ka ma* (awareness as such).
5. We have chosen the commentary version, *de yi rnam smin 'bras bu ci* (What are its inevitable consequences?), rather than the source verse version, *rnam smin de yi 'bras bu ci* (What is the result of its inevitable ripening?).
6. We assume that *rgyun* (continuity) is a misspelling of *rgyan* (adornment). In both the tantra itself and the same passage as cited in Longchen Rabjam's *The Precious Treasury of the Basic Space of Phenomena*, the term is *rgyan*.
7. We have chosen the commentary version, *tha snyad tsam du rdul tsam mi dmigs pas* (since there is not the slightest frame of reference, even in terms of conventional labels), rather than the source verse version, *tha snyad tsam du'ang de bas mi dmigs pas* (and even more than that, there is no frame of reference, even in terms of conventional labels).
8. We have chosen the version in the revised Adzom Chögar edition, *rna phrug* (wild goat kid), rather than that in the original Adzom Chögar edition, *gla phrug* (musk deer fawn).
9. We have chosen the source verse version, *ngang gis gnas* (abides as a matter of course), rather than the commentary version, *rang gis gnas* (abides in and of itself).
10. We have chosen the source verse version, *blo bde'i cog bzhag* (imperturbable rest, which is carefree), rather than the commentary version, *blo bde cog bzhag* (imperturbable rest, a carefree state).
11. We assume that the commentary version, *blus* (ransomed), is a misspelling of *bslus* (fooled), given that the source verses have *bslus*, and the revised Adzom Chögar edition has *slus* (fool).
12. We have chosen the source verse version, *chos kyi bdag tu bcings* (misconstruing phenomena as having identity), rather than the commentary version, *chos kyis bdag tu bcings* (misconstruing identity due to phenomena).
13. We assume that *sgros med* (without method) is a misspelling of *spros med* (unelaborate).

14. We have chosen the commentary version, *g.yos pa med pa thog ma'i mkha' dbyings su* (no wavering. . . . Throughout the vastness of original basic space), rather than the source verse version, *g.yos pa med pa'i thog ma'i mkha' dbyings su* (Throughout the vastness of unwavering, original basic space).
15. We have chosen the tantra version, *sangs rgyas kun gyi gsang ba'i gnas* (secret of all buddhas), rather than the commentary version, *sangs rgyas kun gyi gsang ba'i sngags* (secret mantra of all buddhas).
16. While the commentary version is *mi shes sam* and the source verse version is *ma shes sam*, they carry the same meaning (“Don’t you know”).
17. The commentary version for “body, speech, and mind” is *lus ngag sems*, while the source verse version is the more common expression *lus ngag yid*. (We assume, of course, that *lugs* is a misspelling of *lus*.) In addition, in the commentary, the term “knot” is in the instrumental case (*mdud des*).
18. We assume that *grong ba* (to die) is a misspelling of *drang ba* (that which is provisional), and the revised Adzom Chögar edition has *drang ba*.
19. We have chosen the commentary version, *rang rig* (self-knowing awareness), rather than the source verse version, which is simply *rig pa* (awareness).
20. We have chosen the source verse version, *mkha' ltar dag pas theg pa'i 'dren sgo med* (It is pure like space, and so entails no provisional spiritual approach), rather than the commentary version, *mkha' ltar dag pa theg pa'i 'dren sgo med* (It is pure like space. There is no provisional spiritual approach).
21. We have chosen the source verse version, *rtog pa* (thoughts), rather than the commentary version, *rtogs pa* (realization).
22. We have chosen the tantra version, *las 'das* (beyond), rather than the commentary version, *dang bral* (free of).
23. We have chosen the tantra version, *brtag* (labeling), rather than the commentary version, *rtag* (permanence).
24. We have chosen the commentary version, *snying po bas* (since the heart essence), rather than the source verse version, *snying po la* (in the heart essence).
25. We have chosen the commentary version, *stong pa'i rang gzugs* (the natural expressions of emptiness), rather than the source verse version, *snying po'i rang gzugs* (the natural expressions of the heart essence).
26. We have chosen the commentary version, *bzang ngan med par* (being neither positive nor negative), rather than the source verse version, which is simply *bzang ngan med pa* (neither positive nor negative).

27. We assume that *rtogs* (realization) is a misspelling of *rtog* (concepts).
28. We read *rang* (self) as *rang ka* (vague); both the Dergé and the revised Adzom Chögar editions have *rang ka*.
29. We have chosen the commentary version, *rig pa las* (from awareness), which is also found in the Dergé edition, rather than the source verse version, *rig pa la* (in awareness).
30. We have chosen the commentary version, *da* (now), rather than the source verse version, *de* (that).
31. We have chosen the commentary version, *byis pa drang ba'i chos* (teachings . . . which are designed to guide the immature), rather than the source verse version, *byis pa 'dra ba'i chos* (teachings that are similar to those who are immature).
32. We have chosen the version in the revised Adzom Chögar edition, *byed pa* (what is created), rather than that in the original Adzom Chögar edition, *byas pa* (what has been created).
33. We have chosen the source verse version, *bde sdug rgyun mi 'chad* (an uninterrupted flow of happiness and suffering), rather than the commentary version, which gives only *sdug bsngal rgyun mi 'chad* (an uninterrupted flow of suffering).
34. We assume that *sgron po* is a misspelling of *sgrin po* (cleverness), and the revised Adzom Chögar edition has *sgrin po*.
35. We have chosen the source verse version, *'bad rstol med par* (effortlessly), rather than the commentary version, *'bad rtsol med pas* (due to the absence of effort).
36. We have chosen the source verse version, *dus nyid nas* (even as), rather than the commentary version, *dus rnyed nas* (having discovered the point at which).
37. We assume that *rang bzhin nges pas* (of a definite nature) is a misspelling of *rang bzhin med pas* (ineffable by nature).
38. We have chosen the commentary version, *blang dor med pa* (has nothing to do with acceptance or rejection), rather than the source verse version, *blang dor byed pa* (indulging in acceptance and rejection).
39. We have chosen the source verse version, *lo tog* (crops), rather than the commentary version, *lo 'dab* (leaves and petals).
40. We have kept the commentary version, *ming yang med* (not even the label . . . exists), even though the tantra has *yul yang med* (not even the object . . . exists).
41. We have kept the commentary version, *rnam rtog yid* (the concepts of discursive mind), even though the tantra version has *sna tshogs yul* (the various kinds of sense objects).

Chapter 2

1. We assume that *gling bzhi* (four continents) is a misspelling of *gleng gzhi* (underlying basis).
2. We have chosen the source verse version, *chos kun* (all phenomena), rather than the commentary version, *chos rnam* (phenomena).
3. We have chosen the commentary version, *snga phyi ris med* (not divisible into earlier or later), rather than the source verse version, *snga phyi yul med* (without earlier or later object).
4. We have chosen the commentary version, *mtshan ma'i ris dang bral* (freedom from bias based on characteristics), rather than the source verse version, *mtshan ma'i yul dang bral* (freedom from objects with characteristics).
5. We have chosen the source verse version, *mtshon bral* (beyond characterization), rather than the commentary version, *mtshan bral* (beyond characteristics).
6. We have chosen the commentary version, *mtshams las 'das* (beyond the extreme), rather than the source verse version, *chos las 'das* (beyond phenomena).
7. We assume that *phyal yal* in the source verse is a misspelling of *phyal yas* (expansive openness), which is in the commentary.
8. Assuming that *mtha' yas* is a misspelling of *mtha' las*, we have chosen the commentary version, *mtha' las 'das pa* (the limitations . . . are transcended), rather than the source verse version, *chos las 'das pa* (phenomena . . . are transcended).
9. We have chosen the commentary version, *chos kun* (all phenomena), rather than the source verse version, *chos rnam* (phenomena).
10. We have chosen the commentary version, *cer mthong* (perceive this in all its freshness), rather than the source verse version, *cir mthong* (whatever . . . perceive). The Dergé edition of the source verses also reads *cer mthong*.
11. We assume that the source verse version, *phyal mas*, is a misspelling of *phyal yas* (expansive openness), which is in the commentary.
12. We assume that *phyam phyam* in the source verse is a misspelling of *phyam phyal* (complete openness), which is in the commentary.
13. We have chosen the commentary version, *gzhi bde'i ngang dang* (with the blissful ground of being), rather than the source verse version, *zhi bde'i ngang du* (within the realm of a state of peace and bliss).
14. We have chosen the commentary version, *rang gdangs* (naturally radiant), rather than the source verse version, *ngang gdangs* (innately radiant), and the revised Adzom Chögar edition of the source verses has *rang gdangs*.

15. We have chosen the commentary version, *phyal ba rang snang stong par bcings* (subsumed within openness and is naturally manifest and empty), rather than the source verse version, *phyal ba rang snang stong pas bcings* (embraced by openness and is naturally manifest and empty).
16. We assume that *rto gs ma byed* (do not realize) should read *rto gs ma byed* (do not think of), and it is cited as such in Chapter I of the commentary.
17. We assume that a syllable has been added inadvertently, in that *ma rig pa* (nonrecognition of awareness) should read *rig pa* (awareness).
18. We assume that *btsal* (to seek) is a misspelling of *rtsol* (involving effort), particularly since the same passage as cited by Longchen Rabjam at the close of the Introduction uses *rtsol*.
19. We assume that *rnam pa gnyis* (twofold division) is a misspelling of *rnam gnyis med* (no twofold division), particularly since the same passage as cited by Longchen Rabjam at the close of the Introduction uses *rnam gnyis med*.
20. We assume that *bskyed* (arousal of) is a misspelling of *kyi* (of), particularly since the same passage as cited by Longchen Rabjam at the close of the Introduction uses *kyi*.
21. We have chosen the commentary version, *dmigs su med* (no frame of reference applies), rather than the source verse version, *gnyis su med* (there is no duality).
22. We have chosen the commentary version, *las 'das* (beyond), rather than the source verse version, *la bzla* (coming to the decisive experience).

Chapter 3

1. We have chosen the source verse version, *de nas* (furthermore), rather than the commentary version, *ye nas* (timelessly).
2. We have chosen the commentary version, *nam mkha'i ngang las* (from the realm of space), rather than the source verse version, *nam mkha'i ngang la* (in the realm of space).
3. We have chosen the commentary version, *rang rig gzhi* (self-knowing awareness, the ground of being), rather than the source verse version, *rang bzhin gzhi* (the nature, the ground of being).
4. We have chosen the source verse version, *rang gdangs* (naturally radiant), rather than the commentary version, *rang mdangs* (naturally glowing).
5. We have chosen the commentary version, *sku gsum* (three kayas), rather than the source verse version, *sku ni* (kaya).
6. We have chosen the commentary version, *gzhi* (ground), rather than the source verse version, *ngang* (context).
7. We have chosen the commentary version, *btsal ba med de* (without hav-

ing to be sought), rather than the source verse version, *rtsol ba med par* (without effort). While both versions carry meaning, the parallel citation from Garab Dorjé's *The Direct Encounter with the Three Kayas* has *btsal ba med par* (without having to be sought).

8. We have chosen the source verse version, *rnal du 'byor bya ste* (immerse yourself in genuine being), rather than the commentary version, *rnal 'byor zhes bya ste* (there is what is called "immersion in genuine being").
9. We have chosen the commentary version, *ma brten par* (without depending on), rather than the source verse version, *mi ston par* (without revealing).
10. We have chosen the commentary version, *snang yul* (objects that manifest), rather than the source verse version, *snang tshul* (the manner in which manifestation occurs).
11. We have chosen the source verse version, the imperative form *zhog* (Rest!), rather than the commentary version, the more stative form *bzhag* (One rests).
12. We have chosen the source verse version, *gdangs gsal ba* (lucid radiance), rather than the commentary version, *dangs gsal ba* (subtly lucid).
13. We have chosen the commentary version, *spro bsdu med pa'i 'gag* (one implication . . . without the coming and going of thoughts), rather than the source verse version, which is simply *spro bsdu med pa yi* (without the coming and going of thoughts).
14. We have chosen the tantra version, *de las ma bsgyur* (not to deviate from this), rather than the commentary version, *de las bsgyur ba* (the change that this brings).
15. We have chosen the commentary version, *rang snang* (naturally manifest), rather than the source verse version, *rang bzhin* (nature).
16. We have chosen the commentary version, *rol par lhun grub* (spontaneously present as the display), rather than the source verse version, *rol pa lhun grub* (is the spontaneously present display).
17. We have chosen the commentary version, *bya mi dgos* (there is no need to try), rather than the source verse version, *byar med do* (there is nothing to be done).
18. We have chosen the commentary version, *klong* (expanse), rather than the source verse version, *dbyings* (basic space).
19. We assume that *cir snang ma yin* (this does not appear as anything) is a misspelling of *cir yang ma yin* (this is nothing whatsoever in itself).
20. We have chosen the source verse version, *mu bzhi'i mtha'* (the limitations of the four alternatives), rather than the commentary version, *mu mtha'i mtha'* (the limitations of the limiting alternatives).

21. We assume that *rlung* (wind, subtle energy) is a misspelling of *klong* (expanse).
22. We assume that *sa bzhi* (fourfold ground) is a misspelling of *sa gzhi* (earth below).
23. We have chosen the commentary version, *ltar* (just as), rather than the source verse version, *dang* (and).
24. We have chosen the commentary version, *la* (within), rather than the source verse version, *las* (from).
25. We have chosen the commentary version, *ngang dvangs* (innately pristine), rather than the source verse version, *rang gdangs* (naturally radiant).
26. We have chosen the commentary version, *snang sems* (apparent phenomena and mind), rather than the source verse version, *snang bas* (due to apparent phenomena).

Chapter 4

1. We have chosen the commentary version, *snang* (manifest), rather than the source verse version, *'byung* (occur).
2. We have chosen the commentary version, *rang ngo* (their very essence), rather than the source verse version, *dang po* (at the first).
3. We have chosen the source verse version, *'byung lgar snang yang* (although the five elements manifest), rather than the commentary version, *'byung lgar snang ba* (the manifestation of the five elements).
4. We have kept the commentary version, *rang byung* (naturally occurring), even though the tantra has *rang snang* (naturally manifest).
5. We have chosen the tantra version, *rang la rdzogs pas zhi* (peaceful in its natural perfection), rather than the commentary version, *rang la rdzogs pa bzhin* (being naturally perfect in itself).
6. We have chosen the commentary version, *chos kun ma 'gags rol pa ci shar yang* (all phenomena are unceasing, and regardless of the display that arises), rather than the source verse version, *chos sku ma 'gags chol pa ci shar yang* (dharmakaya is unceasing, and regardless of the vagaries that arise).
7. Given that this exact line appears in the citation from *The All-Creating Monarch* that follows, we have chosen the commentary version, *bgrang na brjod mi lang* (any attempt to quantify things would be endless), rather than the source verse version, *bgrangs na brjod du med* (any attempt to quantify things would lead to there being nothing to say).
8. We have chosen the commentary version, *tha snyad* (conventional), rather than the source verse version, *tha dad* (separate).
9. We have chosen the source verse version, *phyi yi chos kun* (all outer phe-

nomena), rather than the commentary version, *phyi yi chos rnams* (outer phenomena).

10. We have chosen the commentary version, *rang gdangs* (inherent radiance), rather than the source verse version, *rang mdangs* (inherent inner glow).
11. We have chosen the source verse version, *dbyings gcig rtogs pa* (the realization of a single basic space), rather than the commentary version, *dbyings gcig rtag pa* (a single, permanent basis space).
12. We have chosen the source verse version, *rang yal* (fade away naturally), rather than the commentary version, *rang gsal* (naturally lucid).
13. We have chosen the commentary version, *gang ltar 'gyus pa* (however the mind stirs), rather than the source verse version, *gang shar 'gyus pa* (the stirring of whatever arises in the mind).
14. We have chosen the commentary version, *chos nyid dgongs par gsal* (the nature of phenomena is evident as enlightened intent), rather than the source verse version, *chos nyid dgongs pa gsal* (the nature of phenomena is clear enlightened intent).
15. We have chosen the source verse version, the imperative form *zhog* (Rest!), rather than the commentary version, the more stative form *bzhag* (One rests).
16. We have chosen the source verse version, in which the particle *ste* indicates a pause in thought, rather than the commentary version, in which the connective particle *dang* (and) indicates a series.
17. In all three instances in this sentence, we have chosen the tantra version, *nga rgyal* (pride), rather than the commentary version, *sangs rgyas* (buddha). This is also supported by the logical progression of the afflictive emotions that are treated in the citation.
18. We have chosen the tantra version, *bshad* (I will explain), rather than the commentary version, *shar* (there arises).
19. We have chosen the tantra version, *zad* (falls away), rather than the commentary version, *zab* (profound).
20. We have chosen the tantra version, *yal* (things fade), rather than the commentary version, *grol* (there is freedom).
21. We have chosen the tantra version, *du mar stongs* (devoid of multiplicity)—and it is cited as such in Longchen Rabjam's *The Precious Treasury of Words and Their Meanings*—rather than the commentary version, *du mar rtogs* (realized to be multiplicity).
22. We have chosen the tantra version, *gzhi nas* (from the ground of being), rather than the commentary version, *zhi gnas* (abiding calmly).

23. We have chosen the tantra version, *btags* (posited), rather than the commentary version, *rtogs* (realized).
24. We have chosen the commentary version, *mu med* (boundless), rather than the source verse version, *mu bzhi* (the four limitations).
25. We have chosen the commentary version, *gcig pur* (within oneness), rather than the source verse version, *gcig pu* (oneness).
26. We have chosen the commentary version, *nyer zhi ba* (completely subside), rather than the source verse version, *nyer zhi bas* (given that . . completely subside).
27. We have chosen the commentary version, *dngos po med* (there is no substance), rather than the source verse version, *dngos por med* (there exists nothing in, or as, substance).
28. The actual line cited here is found in *The Pearl Garland*, not *The Reverberation of Sound*.

Chapter 5

1. We have chosen the commentary version, *rnam rtog gzung 'dzin* (dualistic thinking), rather than the source verse version, *rnam rtog chung zhing* (having few thoughts).
2. We have chosen the source verse version, *bdoq pas* (with gifts), rather than the commentary version, *rtogs pas* (with realization).
3. We have chosen the commentary version, *snod kun* (all candidates), rather than the source verse version, *snod bcud* (the animate and inanimate universe).
4. We have chosen the tantra version, *brdal ba* (expanding), rather than the commentary version, *gdal na* (if one expands).
5. We have chosen the tantra version, *rtse gcig gsal ba* (this lucid state of one-pointedness), rather than the commentary version, *rtse gcig ngang na* (within this one-pointed context).
6. We have chosen the tantra version, *blo dngos dran pa* (attention that reifies things), rather than the commentary version, *blo rmongs dran pa* (attention of deluded mind).
7. We have presented the version of this section of the tantra as it is cited in the commentary. An alternative version, found in the tantra itself, reads as follows:

In meditation that constitutes uncultivated abiding,
the avenues of the senses are lucid, though thoughts do not stir
in the conceptual mind.

Mind that reflects on awareness itself is such that it is not lost to outer phenomena.

Fragmentation is not lucidity, nor does isolation lead to a blank apathy,

nor is there obsession with bliss, nor does impartiality become apathy,

nor is there contrived relaxation in the lucidity of consciousness, nor are there paths based on incorrect training,

nor is there fixation on the perpetuation of inner bliss,

nor is there reification of clear attributes,

nor is there manipulation of visualized colors and syllables.

8. We have chosen the tantra version, *rang sar bzhag pa* (resting in their natural condition), rather than the commentary version, *rang sar bzhag pas* (by resting in their natural condition).
9. We have chosen the commentary version, *mi nub snying po* (infallible heart essence), rather than the source verse version, *don gyi snying po* (ultimate heart essence).
10. We have chosen the commentary version, *zhi bde'i yid kyis* (in a peaceful and happy frame of mind), rather than the source verse version, *zhe dga'i yid kyis* (in a joyful frame of mind).
11. We have chosen the commentary version, *tshe 'dir chos sku rgyal po'i gtan srid zin* (Dharmakaya, a majestic state of authentic being, is gained in this lifetime), rather than the source verse version, *tshe 'dis chos sku rgyal ba'i bstan srid zin* (Dharmakaya, the authentic being of victorious ones, is attained through this lifetime).

Conclusion

1. We have chosen the source verse version, *bstan pa 'dis* (these teachings . . . make), rather than the commentary version, *bstan pa ni* (as for the teachings).
2. We have chosen the source verse version, *gdod ma'i gzhi dbyings* (primordial basic space as the ground of being), rather than the commentary version, *gdod ma'i mkha' dbyings* (primordial spacious expanse).
3. We have chosen the source verse version, *'dis* (may this), rather than the source verse version, which is simply *'di* (this).

Sources Cited

Tibetan authors seldom cite sources by their full titles; rather, they use contractions, and often different versions thereof. We tried to translate these versions in a straightforward way. However, when a contraction seemed ambiguous or ungrammatical in English (for example, *Kun byed* [The All-Creating] instead of *Kun byed rgyal po* [The All-Creating Monarch] or *Kun gsal* [The All-Illuminating] instead of *Thig le kun gsal* [The All-Illuminating Sphere]), we opted for the longer version.

All-Creating Monarch (*Kun byed / Kun byed rgyal po / Chos thams cad rdzogs pa chen po byang chub kyi sems kun byed rgyal po*)

Augmentation of the Rare and Precious (*dKon brtsegs / dKon mchog brtsegs pa; Skt. Ārya mahāratnakūṭa dharma paryāya śatasāhasrika granthe trisamvara nirdeśā parivarta nāma mahāyāna sūtra*)

Blazing Lamp (*sGron ma 'bar ba / gSer gyi me tog mdzes pa rin po che sgron ma 'bar ba'i rgyud*)

Clear Words (*Tshig gsal; Skt. Mūla madhyamaka vṛtti prasannapadā*), by Chandrakirti

Commentary on the Oral Lineage (*sNyan brgyud ti ka*)

Conjunction of the Sun and Moon (*Nyi zla kha sbyor / Nyi ma dang zla ba kha sbyor ba chen po gsang ba'i rgyud*)

Cutting Through the Three Times (*Dus gsum chig chod*), by Garab Dorjé

Deep Immersion in Awareness (*Rig pa spyi blugs*), by Garab Dorjé

Direct Encounter with the Three Kayas (*sKu gsum thug phrad*), by Garab Dorjé

Discourse on the Most Majestic State of Meditative Absorption (*Ting nge 'dzin rgyal po'i mdo*; Skt. Ārya sarva dharma svabhāva samatāvipañcita samādhi rāja nāma mahāyāna sūtra)

Discourse of the Rare and Sublime Meteor (*dKong mchog ta la la'i mdo*; Skt. Ārya ratnolkānāma dhāraṇī mahāyāna sūtra)

Elucidation of the Twenty Thousand Stanzas (*Nyi khri snang ba*; Skt. Ārya pañca vimśati sāhasrikā prajñā pāramitopadeśa śāstra abhisamayālamkāra vṛtti), by Vimuktasena

Examination of the Key Points of Timeliness (*Dus gnad brtags pa*), by Padmasambhava

(*Great Fundamental Tantra of the Reverberation of Sound* ((*sGra*) *thal 'gyur* (*rsta ba'i rgyud chen po*) / *Rin po che* 'byung bar byed pa sgra *thal 'gyur chen po'i rgyud*))

Great Garuda (Soaring in Space) (*Khyung chen* / *Khyung chen mkha' lding*)

(*Great*) *Victory Banner That Never Falls(: Supreme Space)* (*Mi nub pa'i rgyal mtshan* / *Mi nub pa'i rgyal mtshan chen po nam mkha' che*)

Heart Essence of Secrets (*gSang snying* / *gSang ba snying po*; Skt. Śrī guhya-garbha tattva viniścaya)

Major Commentary on the Eight Thousand Stanzas (*brGyad stong 'grel chen*; Skt. Ārya aṣṭa sāhasrikā prajñā pāramitā vyākhyā abhisamayā lamkāra āloka nāma), by Haribhadra

Minor Commentary (on the Eight Thousand Stanzas) ((*brGyad stong*) 'grel chung; Skt. Abhisamayālamkāra nāma prajñā pāramitopadeśa śāstra vṛtti), by Haribhadra

Natural Freedom of Awareness (*Rig pa rang grol* / *Rig pa rang grol chen po thams cad 'grol ba'i rgyud*)

Natural Freedom That Underlies Characteristics (*mTshan ma rang grol*), by Garab Dorjé

Overwhelming the Six Modes of Consciousness with Splendor (*Tshogs drug zil gnon*), by Garab Dorjé

Pearl Garland (Mu tig phreng ba / Mu tig rin po che phreng ba'i rgyud)

Samantabhadra: Mirror of Enlightened Mind (Kun tu bzang po thugs kyi me long / Kun tu bzang po thugs kyi me long gi rgyud ces bya ba thams cad ston pa'i rgyud)

Six Expanses (kLong drug pa / Kun tu bzang po klong drug pa'i rgyud)

Source Verses on the Middle Way (dBu ma rtsa ba; Skt. Prajñānāma mūla madhyamaka kārikā), by Nagarjuna

Spoken Words: The Secret Oral Lineage (Kha gtam gsang ba'i snyan brgyud), by Shri Singha

Tantra of Adornment Through Direct Introduction (Ngo sprod spras pa'i rgyud / Ngo sprod rin po che spras pa'i zhing khams bstan pa'i rgyud)

(Tantra of the) All-Illuminating Sphere (Kun gsal / Thig le kun gsal)

(Tantra of the Great and) Perfect Dynamic Energy of the Lion (Seng ge rtsal rdzogs (chen po'i rgyud))

(Tantra of) Heaped Jewels (Rin po che spungs pa / Rin po che spungs pa'i rgyud / Rin chen spungs pa yon tan chen po ston pa rgyud kyi rgyal po)

Tantra of Naturally Occurring Perfection: The River of Empowerment (rDzogs pa rang byung dbang gi chu bo'i rgyud / sKu thams cad kyi snang ba ston pa dbang rdzogs pa rang byung chen po'i rgyud)

Tantra of Precious Blazing Remains (sKu gdung 'bar ba rin po che'i rgyud / dPal nam mkha' med pa'i sku gdung 'bar ba chen po'i rgyud)

Tantra Summarizing the Ultimate Meaning (Nges don 'dus pai rgyud)

(Tantra of the Supreme) Array of Inset Gems (Nor bu phra bkod chen po'i rgyud / Nor bu phra bkod rang gi don thams cad gsal bar byed pa'i rgyud)

Tantra of the Supreme Beauty of Auspiciousness (bKra shis mdzes ldan chen po'i rgyud / bKra shis mdzes ldan chen po'i rgyud dpal nam mkha' med pa chen po'i rgyud)

(Tantra of Supreme) Naturally Arising Awareness (Rang shar / Rig pa rang shar / Rig pa rang shar chen po'i rgyud / De bzhin gshegs pa thams cad kyi ting nge 'dzin yongs su bshad pa ye shes 'dus pa'i mdo theg pa chen

*po gsang ba bla na med pa'i rgyud chos thams cad kyi 'byung gnas sangs
rgyas thams cad kyi dgongs pa gsang sngags gcig pa'i ye shes rdzogs pa
chen po'i don gsal bar byed pa'i rgyud rig pa rang shar chen po'i rgyud)*

Tantra of the Supreme Secret: The Enlightened Mind of All Tathagatas (De
bzhin gshegs pa thams cad kyi thugs gsang ba chen po'i rgyud)

Tantra Without Letters (Yi ge med pa / Yi ge med pa'i rgyud / Yi ge med pa'i
rgyud chen po zhes bya ba rin po che rgyal mtshan gyi rgyud rgyal po'i
gdud rgyud lta ba nam mkha' dang mnyam pa'i rgyud chen po'o)

Text of (Precious) Copper Letters (Zang kyi yig can / Zangs kyi yi ge can /
Rin po che zangs kyi yi ge can)

Treasury of Higher Teachings (mDzod / Chos mgnon pa mdzod; Skt. Abhi-
dharmakośa kārikā), by Vasubandhu

Treasury of Songs of Realization (Do ha mdzod)

Vajra Fortress (rDo rje mkhar rdzong), by Garab Dorjé

Vajrasattva: Mirror of the Heart (rDo rje sems dpa' snying gi me long / rDo
rje sems dpa' snying gi me long gi rgyud)

Web of Magical Display of Manjushri ('Jam dpal sgyu 'phrul drva ba)

White Lotus(: The Major Commentary on the Kalachakra) (Dus 'khor gyi
'grel chen Padma dkar po)

Word List

We have included this word list because the translation of Tibetan terms has yet to be standardized and readers will undoubtedly encounter alternative translations of key terms in other works. We have provided phoneticized versions of the Tibetan terms, rendered according to the eastern Tibetan dialect, to aid readers unfamiliar with the Wylie system of transliteration. Some English words may be listed under the idiom in which they occur in the text (for example, “imagination” is listed under the idiom “beyond imagination”).

English	Wylie Transliteration	Pronunciation
abide	gnas pa	nay pa
absence of extremes	phyogs med	chok may
acceptance and rejection	blang dor, spang blang	lang dor, pang lang
adornment	rgyan	jen
adventitious distortions	glo bur gyi dri ma	lo bur ji dri ma
affirmation and denial	rtag chad	tak chay
afflictive emotion	nyon mongs pa	nyön mong pa
all-creating	kun byed	kun jay
all-encompassing	'ub chub	oob choob
apparent objects	yul snang	yul nang
apparent phenomena	snang ba	nang wa
arise	'char ba, shar ba	char wa, shar wa
authentic	bden pa	den pa
awakened mind (Dzogchen context; Skt. bodhicitta)	byang chub kyi sems	jang chub chi sem

English	Wylie Transliteration	Pronunciation
awakening mind (sutra context; Skt. bodhicitta)	byang chub kyi sems rig pa	jang chub chi sem rig pa
basic space of phenomena (Skt. dharmadhātu)	chos kyi dbyings gzhi	chö chi ying zhi
basis		
beyond characterization and expression	mtshon brjod las 'das pa	tsön jö lay day pa
beyond description, imagination, or expression	smra bsam brjod las 'das pa	ma sam jö lay day pa
beyond imagination or expression	bsam brjod las 'das pa	sam jö lay day pa
bias	ris	ree
body, speech, and mind	sgo gsum	go sum
calm abiding	zhi gnas	zhi nay
Category of Direct Transmission	man ngag sde	men ngak day
Category of Expanse	klong sde	long day
Category of Mind	sems sde	sem day
cause and effect, causality	rgyu 'bras	ju dray
ceaselessly, unceasing	'gag med	gak may
clearly apparent yet ineffable	med pa gsal snang	may pa sal nang
come to a decisive experience	la bzla ba	la da wa
come to a definitive conclusion	gtan la dbab pa	ten la wap pa
compassion	snying rje	nying jay
composite	'dus byas	dü jay
concept, conceptual thought, conceptual- ization	rtog pa	tok pa

English	Wylie Transliteration	Pronunciation
conceptual mind	yid	yi
conditioned existence and the state of peace	srid zhi	si zhi
conduct	spyod pa	chö pa
confirmed or refuted	grub bsal	drup sal
confusion	'khrul pa	trul pa
consciousness	rnam shes, shes pa	nam shay, shay pa
construct	dmigs pa	mik pa
continuous	rgyun chad med pa	jun chay may pa
created	byas pa	jay pa
cutting through solidity	khregs chod	trek chö
defining characteristic	mtshan nyid	tsen nyi
definitive meaning	nges don	ngay dön
deliberate action	bya byed	ja jay
deliberate effort	bya rtsol	ja tsol
deny or affirm	dgag sgrub	gak drup
described	brjod	jö
direct transmission	man ngag	men ngak
discerning the implications	'gag bsdams pa	gak dam pa
discursive thought	rnam rtog	nam tok
display	rol pa	rol pa
dualistic perception	gnyis 'dzin, gzung 'dzin	nyee dzin, zung dzin
dynamic energy	rtsal	tsal
effort and achievement	rtsol sgrub	tsol drup
eight modes of consciousness	tshogs brgyad	tsok jay
elaboration	spros pa	trö pa
embrace	bcings pa	ching pa
embrace the larger scope	chings su bcing ba	ching su ching wa
emptiness	stong pa nyid	tong pa nyi
empty form	stong gzugs	tong zug
empty yet lucid	stong gsal	tong sal
enlightened activity	phrin las	trin lay
(enlightened) embodiment, form	sku	ku
enlightened intent	dgongs pa	gong pa

English	Wylie Transliteration	Pronunciation
enlightened mind	thugs	tuk
enlightened speech	gsung	sung
enlightenment	byang chub	jang chup
equalness	mnyam pa nyid	nyam pa nyi
equilibrium	phyam gdal, brdal	cham dal
equipoise	mnyam bzhag	nyam zhak
essence	ngo bo	ngo wo
evenness	mnyam pa nyid	nyam pa nyi
evidence	rtags	tak
exaggeration and denigration	sgro skur	dro kur
existence	yod pa	yö pa
expanse	klong	long
fixation	zhen 'dzin	zhen dzin
foundation	gzhi	zhi
four alternatives	mu bzhi	mu zhi
framework, frame of reference	dmigs pa	mik pa
free of anything needing to be done	bya bral	ja dral
free of limitations	mtha' bral	ta dral
freedom, free	'grol ba	drol wa
freely	rgya yan	ja yen
fruition	'bras bu	dray bu
fundamentally unconditioned	gshis	shee
Great Perfection approach, great perfection	rdzogs (pa) chen (po)	dzog (pa) chen (po)
ground of being	gzhi	zhi
ground of being as basic space	gzhi dbyings	zhi ying
ground of being mani- festing as appearances	gzhi snang	zhi nang
habitual pattern	bag chags	bak chak
has never existed	ma grub pa	ma drup pa

English	Wylie Transliteration	Pronunciation
heart drop	snying thig	nying tik
heart essence	snying po	nying po
identity	bdag	dak
immersion in genuine being (Skt. yoga)	rnal 'byor	nal jor
imperturbable rest	cog bzhag	chok zhak
inconceivable	bsam med	sam may
indescribable	smra med	ma may
indeterminate	nges med	ngey may
ineffable by nature	rang bzhin med pa	rang zhin may pa
ineffability	med pa	may pa
inevitable consequence	rnam smin	nam min
inexpressible	brjod med	jö may
innately unsullied, innate lucidity	ngang dvangs	ngang dang
inner lucidity	nang gsal	nang sal
invest with true existence	bden 'dzin	den dzin
level of realization (Skt. bhumi)	sa	sa
limitation	mtha'	ta
logical absurdity	ha cang thal ba'i rigs pa	ha chang tal way rig pa
lucidity	gsal ba	sal wa
magical display, magical expression	cho 'phrul	cho trul
master of awareness	rig 'dzin	rig dzin
meaningful, ultimate meaning	don	dön
meditation, cultivate in meditation	sgom pa	gom pa
meditative absorption	ting nge 'dzin	ting ngay dzin
meditative stability	bsam gtan	sam ten
mind, ordinary mind	sems	sem
mindstream	rgyud	jü
natural freedom	rang grol	rang drol

English	Wylie Transliteration	Pronunciation
natural great perfection	rang bzhin rdzogs pa chen po	rang zhin dzog pa chen po
natural lucidity	rang gsal	rang sal
natural mind	rang sems	rang sem
naturally manifest	rang snang	rang nang
naturally occurring	rang byung	rang jung
naturally pristine	rang sangs	rang sang
naturally unsullied	rang d(v)angs	rang dang
nature	rang bzhin	rang zhin
nature of mind	sems nyid	sem nyi
nature of phenomena (Skt. dharmatā)	chos nyid	chö nyi
noncomposite	'dus ma byas	dü ma jay
nondual	gnyis med	nyee may
nonexistence, nonexistent	med pa	may pa
nonexistent as an object	yul med	yul may
nonrecognition of awareness	ma rig pa	ma rig pa
nonreferential	yul med	yul may
not abide in any specific way	mi gnas pa	mi nay pa
not defined by restric- tions or extremes	rgya chad phyogs lhung med pa	ja chay chok lhung may pa
not made and then unmade	'du bral med pa	du dral may pa
object, sense object	yul	yul
oneness	gcig pu	chik pu
openness	phyal ba	chal wa
ordinary consciousness	blo	lo
original purity	ka dag	ka dak
perceiver	yul can	yul chen
pervasive and extensive	khyab brdal	chab dal
phenomenon	chos	chö
pith instructions	man ngag	men ngak
positive and negative	dkar nag	kar nak

English	Wylie Transliteration	Pronunciation
positive and negative actions	dge sdig	gay dik
primordial	gdod ma, thog ma	dö ma, tok ma
produced	byas pa	jay pa
profound insight	lhag mthong	lhak tong
provisional meaning	drang don	drang dön
pure vision	dag snang	dak nang
quantum leap	thod rgal	tö gal
radiance	gdangs	dang
range of finite experience	spyod yul	chö yul
realize	rtogs pa	tok pa
recognition	ngo shes	ngo shay
reify	'dzin pa, gzung ba	dzin pa, zung wa
relative reality	kun rdzob	kun dzop
resolve	zad pa	zay pa
responsiveness	thugs rje	tuk jay
restrictions	rgya chad	gya chay
reveal the key point	gnad bkrol ba	nay trol wa
self-identity	gang zag gi bdag	gang zak gi dak
simultaneity of appearance and emptiness	snang stong	nang tong
simultaneity of awareness and emptiness	rig stong	rig tong
six modes of		
consciousness	tshogs drug	tsok druk
skillful means	thabs	tap
spacious	yangs pa	yang pa
sphere	thig le	tig lay
spontaneous presence	lhun grub	lhun drup
subjective perceptions	yul can	yul chen
sublime knowing	shes rab	shay rap
substance	dngos po	ngö po
subtle lucidity	dvangs	dang
suchness	de bzhin nyid	de zhin nyi
supreme transference	'pho ba chen po	po wa chen po

English	Wylie Transliteration	Pronunciation
ten attributes	rang bzhin bcu	rang zhin chu
thatness	de (kho na) nyid	de (ko na) nyi
theme	chings	ching
timeless awareness	ye shes	ye shay
timelessly	ye nas	yej nay
transmission	lung	lung
true existence	bden pa	den pa
ultimate reality	don dam	dön dam
unbiased	phyogs med	chok may
unborn	skye med	chay may
uncontrived	ma bcos	ma chö
uninterrupted	bar med	bar may
unique	nyag gcig	nyak chik
universe	nod bcud	nö chü
unobstructed	zang thal	zang tal
unrestricted, without restrictions	rgya yan	ja yen
utter lucidity	'od gsal	ö sal
vacillate	g.yo ba	yo ba
vanish naturally	rang dengs	rang deng
vast expanse	klong chen	long chen
waver	g.yo ba	yo ba
way of abiding	gnas lugs	nay luk
wholly positive (Skt. Samantabhadra)	kun bzang	kun zang
wide-open clarity	har sangs	har sang
without anything		
needing to be done	byar med	jar may
without characteristics	mtshan (ma) med (pa)	tsen (ma) may (pa)
without coming together or separating	'du bral med pa	du dral may pa
without differentiation or exclusion	dbye bsal med pa	yey sal may pa
without substance	dngos med	ngö may
without transition or change	'pho 'gyur med pa	po jur may pa

English	Wylie Transliteration	Pronunciation
without true existence	bden med	den may
world of appearances and possibilities	snang srid	nang si